

SEWARD PENINSULA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

Nome Mini-Convention Center
Nome, Alaska
October 24, 2017
9:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Fred Eningowuk. Acting Chair
Tom Gray
Louis Green
Brandon Ahmasuk
Ronald Kirk
Leland Oyoumick
Charles Saccheus
Elmer Seetot

Regional Council Coordinator - Karen Deatherage

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S
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3 (Nome, Alaska - 10/24/2017)
4
5 (On record)
6
7 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Good morning.
8 I'd like to ask for an invocation by Elmer Seetot.
9
10 (Invocation)
11
12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I'd like to
13 call this meeting to order. I'll ask for a roll call
14 from Karen.
15
16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
17 This is Karen Deatherage. Theodore Katcheak.
18
19 (No response)
20
21 MS. DEATHERAGE: Theodore called and
22 said -- he has an excused absence, so he will not be
23 able to attend the meeting due to a schedule conflict.
24
25 Brandon Ahmasuk.
26
27 (No response)
28
29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Brandon emailed me and
30 left me a message that he has a medical appointment
31 this morning, but he will be in as soon as that is
32 over. Louis Green.
33
34 (No response)
35
36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Tom Gray.
37
38 MR. GRAY: Yes, ma'am.
39
40 MS. DEATHERAGE: Leland Oyoumick.
41
42 MR. OYOUMICK: Here.
43
44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Fred Eningowuk.
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46 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Here.
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48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Elmer Seetot.
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1 MR. SEETOT: Here.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Charles Saccheus.

4

5 MR. SACCHEUS: Here.

6

7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Ronald Kirk.

8

9 MR. KIRK: Here.

10

11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12 We have a quorum.

13

14 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
15 Karen. At this time we'll do the welcome and
16 introductions. We'll do the introductions starting
17 from our left side over there.

18

19 MR. SACCHEUS: I'm Charles Saccheus
20 from Elim representing the Elim people.

21

22 MR. KIRK: Ronald Kirk from Stebbins
23 representing the community of Stebbins.

24

25 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Fred Eningowuk
26 representing Shishmaref and the rest of our people here
27 in Seward Peninsula.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hello. My name is
30 Karen Deatherage. I'm the Council Coordinator for the
31 Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.
32 Thank you.

33

34 MR. OYOUMICK: Leland Oyoumick from
35 Unalakleet.

36

37 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Jr., Brevig
38 Mission.

39

40 MR. GRAY: Tom Gray, Nome, representing
41 all subsistence users.

42

43 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. For
44 those of you on the phone can I please have
45 introductions.

46

47 MS. DEATHERAGE: This is Karen
48 Deatherage. If you're on the phone and you've muted
49 yourself, if you could introduce yourself by unmuting

50

1 yourself, that would be great, and then mute yourself.

2

3 MR. BURCH: Mark Burch with the
4 Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife
5 Conservation.

6

7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Is there anybody else
8 on the phone that would like to introduce themselves,
9 please.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. I
14 believe that's it on the phone. Can we please have
15 introductions from the audience here starting from the
16 front row.

17

18 MS. KOELSCH: Jeanette Koelsch,
19 National Park Service.

20

21 MR. ADKISSON: Ken Adkisson, National
22 Park Service, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve.

23

24 MS. BRAEM: Nikki Braem, National Park
25 Service.

26

27 MS. MIKOW: Beth Mikow, ADF&G Division
28 of Subsistence.

29

30 MR. DUNKER: Bill Dunker with ADF&G
31 here in Nome.

32

33 MR. ASHENFELTER: Roy Ashenfelter with
34 Kawerak.

35

36 MS. HUGHES: Letty Hughes with Alaska
37 Department of Fish and Game here in Nome.

38

39 MS. DEBENHAM: My name is Rosalie
40 Debenham. I'm here representing the Bureau of Indian
41 Affairs and I live in Juneau. Thank you.

42

43 MS. WORKER: Good morning. I'm Suzanne
44 Worker. I'm a biologist with the Office of Subsistence
45 Management.

46

47 MR. JOHNSON: Good morning, Members of
48 the Council. I'm Carl Johnson. I'm the Council
49 Coordination Division Chief with the Office of

50

1 Subsistence Management.

2

3 MS. LAVINE: I'm Robbin LaVine,
4 anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence
5 Management.

6

7 DR. CHEN: Aloha, Council Members. My
8 name is Glenn Chen with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

9

10 MS. DEATHERAGE: For those of you in
11 the audience that haven't signed in, the Chair has
12 asked me to ask you to sign in at our sign-in sheets
13 over there on the table under the map. Thank you.

14

15 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. At this
16 time we'll review and adopt the agenda and ask for a
17 motion to adopt the agenda. I'll give you a little
18 time on that.

19

20 (Pause)

21

22 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Ask for a
23 motion to approve the agenda.

24

25 MR. SEETOT: Mr. Chair. I so move.

26

27 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by
28 Elmer.

29

30 MR. GRAY: Second.

31

32 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by Tom.

33

34

35 MR. GRAY: Question.

36

37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. Members of
38 the Council. We do have one request to add an agenda
39 item. That would be the Northern Caribou Working Group
40 approval and selection of appointees to the working
41 group. This could be added under new business.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MR. GRAY: What was that again?
46 Northern what and what? What does it do?

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48 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair. I'll happily
49 address this for those on the phone. Carl Johnson,

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1 OSM.

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So in this last winter the Chairs of the different Councils affected that deal with the Northern Caribou Herds all met and had a discussion about forming working groups. So there would be a membership from each of the northern Councils, Seward Peninsula, Northwest Arctic, North Slope and Western Interior, that cover the range principally of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd.

Some Councils have already met and voted to agreed to participate in this working group and to appoint members to the working group. The idea would be the four Councils would have discussions and collaborate and coordinate on ideas on how to suggest management approaches to these caribou. It would principally cover Western Arctic Caribou, but since those ranges are also covered by some of the Councils the Central Arctic and Teshekpuk Herds.

You're one of the last Councils to have a discussion on whether or not to participate in this working group.

MR. GRAY: Mr. Chair.

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

MR. GRAY: So this meeting and discussions over the caribou herd is going to be outside of this meeting here. It's going to be a different meeting. The question I have is, is this whole Council is going to be a part of that working group meeting? And are you guys funded for this? Are we going to have a funding problem?

MR. JOHNSON: Through the Chair. A couple questions there. First, the meetings will be done over teleconference so there wouldn't be travel involved. We don't have any additional funding for travel. The point would be that this working group would come up with recommendations that would then be taken back to the Councils.

The working groups don't have any authority to do anything themselves, so they would come up with recommendations and ideas to take back to the Councils and then the Councils would then at a public

1 meeting like this discuss those recommendations and
2 then either adopt them or reject them or modify them.
3

4 In the past how this has worked, for
5 example, the Yukon Councils, Eastern Interior, Western
6 Interior and Yukon Delta, formed a working group that
7 dealt with issues of customary trade on salmon on the
8 Yukon River and they came up with recommendations for
9 fisheries proposals. So that's not exactly what would
10 happen here, but the idea would be something similar to
11 that.
12

13 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, thank
14 you. I believe there will be more discussion in detail
15 as an agenda item and that will be under the new
16 business after the statewide proposal under (d).
17

18 As for a motion to approve the agenda
19 as revised.
20

21 MR. KIRK: I so move.
22

23 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Ask for a
24 second.
25

26 MR. GRAY: Second.
27

28 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Seconded by
29 Tom.
30

31 MR. KIRK: Question.
32

33 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: The question
34 has been called. All those in favor of the motion say
35 aye.
36

37 IN UNISON: Aye.
38

39 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
40 opposed.
41

42 (No opposing votes)
43

44 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: No opposed.
45 So motion to approve the agenda has been approved.
46 Moving on to the agenda. Review and approve the
47 previous meeting minutes. Ask for a motion to review
48 and approve the previous minutes.
49
50

1 MR. SEETOT: Mr. Chair. I move to
2 adopt the minutes.

3
4 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I need a
5 second.

6
7 MR. OYOUMICK: I'll second.

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9 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Discussion.

10
11 (No comments)

12
13 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Anybody call
14 for question, any corrections or anything.

15
16 MR. SEETOT: Mr. Chair. Call for
17 question.

18
19 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Request to
20 adopt the minutes. All those approve reply by saying
21 aye.

22
23 IN UNISON: Aye.

24
25 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
26 opposed same.

27
28 (No opposing votes)

29
30 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion
31 approved to adopt the previous minutes. At this time
32 I'll call for Council Member reports and we'll start on
33 our left side.

34
35 MR. GRAY: Picking on me again.

36
37 (Laughter)

38
39 MR. GRAY: You know, I look at the last
40 year as the weather's been up and down. A year ago
41 beluga hunting I wasn't able to beluga hunt until
42 November. Here we are in kind of the same scenario.
43 Caribou were hit and miss last year and here again the
44 caribou are late in coming this year. Everybody is
45 sitting on the edge of their seat. The weather is
46 crappy.

47
48 The part that I really struggle with is
49 hunting. You know, we have moose hunting on the Seward

50

1 Peninsula and we have two weeks to go moose hunting
2 every year, but the amount of animals that we have it's
3 a frenzy. If you don't have the equipment and the
4 time, five days, seven days, nine days, the hunt's over
5 depending where you're at. You know, that's kind of
6 rough on some of our people, especially the folks that
7 can't afford the \$25,000 boats and \$30-40,000 trucks
8 and so on and so forth.

9
10 But on the other hand we all know what
11 we're getting into. I was just in a meeting a couple
12 days ago that we were talking about reporting.
13 Reporting for moose hunting. Some of the sentiment
14 was, gee, I can't afford to buy a satellite phone to
15 report or I can't afford whatever. Because we were
16 talking about a one-day reporting period instead of a
17 three-day period.

18
19 You know, I'm not very sympathetic to
20 folks. I carry an inReach, something called an
21 inReach. In case I get in trouble, I can phone in. So
22 it's a changing time. Regulations are changing, our
23 hunting schedules are changing, the weather is changing
24 and we all got to adapt to that process.

25
26 Anyway, it's a changing world, guys.

27
28 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Charles.

29
30 MR. SACCHEUS: Well, we've been having
31 quite a time this year on moose hunting. There's
32 hardly any moose in our area, that's east of the
33 Darbies, but there's plenty of bear. That's the
34 trouble with our country. We've got lots of bears.

35
36 And caribou, we're still eating our
37 meat what we catch last fall, last year. We all pack
38 them up and put them away and we still got caribou from
39 last year. It seems like this year we won't even get a
40 chance to hunt caribou because our rivers are still
41 open and that makes it pretty hard.

42
43 And beluga hunting, it was normal as
44 usual. We have six stocks of beluga in Alaska. That's
45 counting the ones in Cook Inlet. The biggest stock
46 there is is Eastern Norton Sound. We've got quite a
47 few beluga over there when we count them.

48
49 Those big beluga from 12 miles outside
50

1 of Cape Darby all the way to the Yukon Delta, one time
2 we count beluga with an Air Commander and there was --
3 we counted over 60,000 beluga from 12 miles outside of
4 Cape Darby all the way to the mouth of the Yukon. I
5 think most of them were intercepting the salmon.
6 That's the time we count about 60,000 beluga.

7
8 The ones we tagged in Point Lay they
9 went up north, four of them went up north of Barrow and
10 spent about two weeks north of Barrow. Two of them
11 went to Greenland and two of them went directly to the
12 Polar Ice Cap. Them beluga, even the ice look solid,
13 they swam all the way to the Polar Ice Cap and they all
14 dived for them little blue cods.

15
16 We put depth, how deep they dived. The
17 ones in the Polar Ice Cap, the two beluga, they dived
18 2,000 feet under. There's a lot of blue cods under
19 there. Those little tom cods are relative of the blue
20 cods. Then two of them went over to Greenland, north
21 of Greenland. Them animals are pretty amazing.

22
23 Those two that went to Greenland came
24 toward Greenland and then two from the Polar Ice Cap
25 they get same day, same hour where they separate. Those
26 things are pretty amazing animals. I don't know how
27 they always communicate, but they're some amazing
28 animals, them beluga.

29
30 When we studied them beluga in Cook
31 Inlet, we find out how they always kill them. They
32 don't swim real fast after them salmon. They swim
33 right behind them. You could try to look down. You
34 can't even see one inch in that Cook Inlet water. Just
35 like coffee when you stir it with milk in it, a lot of
36 milk.

37 Anyway them beluga always diving. We
38 find out that those beluga are always so -- because we
39 always hear them. They all make real big chirp sound.
40 That's when the salmon swim right in front of their
41 nose, they may a big sound. When the salmon belly up,
42 them beluga just go over and bite them and swallow
43 them. They don't chew them either. They eat them
44 whole. I don't know -- they got teeth, but they don't
45 use their teeth. Those things are pretty amazing
46 animals.

47
48 And them little ones, those little baby
49 ones are just born when I'm hunting in front of Elim.

50

1 You know, there's about two or three miles up along the
2 -- where the creeks run out there will be open water
3 and there will be millions of tom cod in the open
4 waters about five or six miles out and them animals
5 they all leave some babysitters. Those big males
6 babysit while the females dive all the way up and go
7 feed on the -- they babysit them little gray whales
8 that are just born.

9
10 When you're sitting on the ice like
11 this they always come right up to you and look at you,
12 them small ones. If you've got your feet -- you've got
13 rubber boots and you've got your feet sticking in the
14 water, they'll come up to you and they'll bump you on
15 the leg and the other one go on this side and bump you.
16 They're really playful animals them cute little beluga.

17
18 Anyway, I think the global warming got
19 kind of an effect on our sea mammals up there because
20 in January two years in a row now we've been seeing the
21 big bowhead whales in January. There will be a whole
22 bunch of beluga following them. The reason why they
23 follow them bowhead whale because during the night they
24 always have ice and them bowhead whales, when they come
25 up, they always break up the ice and them whales always
26 just start breathing good. That's how come they always
27 follow them all over the bay in the middle of the
28 winter.

29
30 What they feed on is them little
31 shrimps. Those beluga are pretty particular what they
32 eat and they really love silver salmon. Like you could
33 count maybe 15, 11, 12, 15 silver salmon. And they
34 don't chew them, they eat them whole. When we catch
35 them, when we study them, we open them up and check out
36 their stomachs. We check their liver to see if there's
37 any toxic chemicals. They're pretty safe to eat.
38 They're just like human beings. They've got their own
39 DNA. Different beluga got -- just like human beings
40 they've got their own DNA.

41
42 I did a lot of studying the past 12, 15
43 years and I learned quite a bit. I spent 31 days out
44 in the Bering Sea west of Aleutian Islands. You can't
45 imagine how many big orcas are out there right amongst
46 the ice. When we go out there and try to put radios on
47 them -- when I go up on the bridge by the captain, we
48 had a little short lady as a captain driving that real
49 big ship. Maybe that ship was 50 to 60 feet long, that

50

1 old battle ship.

2

3

4 Anyway, when there's a lot of orcas
5 around, all them seals ought to be on top of the ice. A
6 I told the marine biologist we got a good day today. A
7 lot of luck today to put radios on them -- make it
8 easier for us to put radios on the seals. They don't
9 like to go down. You could walk right up to them.
10 They won't go down in the water. Just turn around and
11 go toward the middle of the big ice. So they don't
12 like to go in the water whatsoever when there's orcas.
13 You could hear them if you listen to them. You could
14 hear them orcas hollering and make burp, burp, burping
15 sounds. Those sea lions ought to be on top of the ice
16 too.

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Man, you should see those birds out there. Thousands of them. They're heading north. When they find out about that Bering Straits, them big ships going up north, I kind of think the noise kind of affect them too.

Anyway, we got our moose. We didn't have much moose this year because -- I don't know, something happened last spring. I guess too much snow last year. When there's a lot of snow, them bears always kill them. Like if they get three calves, two calves, they'll go to the mother, kill the mother and they'll kill all four of them sometimes, the moose in our area, because we've got a lot of timber. We have 360,000 acres of timber.

Caribou, when they come down, they always go and eat right on our land. They always eat the real juicy moss under them trees. You could pull them out and let them drip. Anyway, that's what the caribou like. This year I don't think we'll have any chance of getting caribou. We've got to order them from Anchorage, I guess.

Right now when I want to eat caribou, I go down to our Native store. I buy reindeer meat. I don't know if there's a reindeer farm in Alaska. I don't know where they get the reindeer, but that meat is pretty good. It's all cut up ready to cook. It saves you a lot of money instead of buying all that -- the gas price is way up and everything.

Anyway, I think our President of the

1 United States, when he got elected, he said that
2 climate change is a hoax. I don't believe him. You
3 could feel it today, the climate change. I'm almost 80
4 years old and I know the difference ever since I was a
5 little boy about our climate. It's getting a lot
6 different.

7
8 You know, they got a big -- they burn a
9 lot of coal in China and all that smoke it always go
10 all the way to the west coast of the United States, so
11 that's what makes our climate a little different. I
12 guess all that pollution up there, all the cars every
13 day.

14
15 Anyway, hopefully we'll be able to get
16 caribou because we got till May, almost into May, first
17 part of April to hunt caribou. Thank you.

18
19 MR. KIRK: Moose hunting in our area
20 was not too good this year because we have to go to our
21 drainage about 20 miles from our village and if it
22 don't rain, it's pretty hard to go up in those
23 drainages with your boat because the water is too low.
24 So we didn't do too good in our area with moose
25 although a lot of people from our village went down to
26 the Yukon and got Yukon permits to hunt moose in the
27 Yukon, so they have moose from the Yukon.

28
29 This spring we had a young beluga wash
30 up on our shore. We didn't know why it died. We tried
31 getting a hold of -- I told the mayor and they tried to
32 notify somebody about it. About maybe two weeks later
33 we had a big female beluga wash up on our shore too.
34 We don't know why they died. They didn't have no kind
35 of bullet holes or injuries on them. They just drifted
36 up dead to the shore.

37
38 Right now the climate is really making
39 a big difference on harvesting. A lot of our food out
40 there, like right now with all our rivers open, I don't
41 know if we'll be able to go and set whitefish nets like
42 we usually do when it freezes. So we're having
43 difficulty with this climate change concerning fishing
44 in our area starting next month.

45
46 That's all I have to report.

47
48 Thank you.

49
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1 MR. OYOUNICK: Hi. I'm Leland from
2 Unalakleet. There isn't too much moose in our area,
3 but they did get some. They had a quota of 34. I
4 think I heard the number that they reached 24, so
5 they're going to proceed to have a winter season, I
6 believe.

7
8 There's still not much kings and
9 they're trying to figure out why. Like everybody else
10 we're kind of wondering too. There's a weir set up up
11 the river that I guess it's due for funding and we'd
12 like to keep that funded so we can know how come we
13 have little or no kings. There's some kings, but not
14 enough like they used to be.

15
16 Growing up as a kid we'd set nets down
17 below the house because we had no motor. We got 30 and
18 after we got done taking care of those 30, then it
19 caught way more, 20 more. Compared to when we were
20 kids to now it's really different. How that comes
21 about to be that way somebody's got to figure that out.
22 We don't know who to blame or what to blame. They're
23 starting to come back more and more, but not as much as
24 like we'd like them to be. There was a lot of humpies,
25 a lot of silvers.

26
27 Oogruk hunting was kind of like a
28 contest sort of with the weather conditions being the
29 way they are. Only a few days to go out and go
30 hunting. On the really nice beautiful days there's
31 more boats than animals, so it makes it difficult
32 because you can't shoot at an animal with a boat
33 behind. We never ever shoot at an animal when there's
34 somebody else behind the animal.

35
36 Other than that we never get caribou
37 for I don't know how long in our area. Usually we have
38 to go somewhere else. I don't know. Things are much
39 much different than they used to be. Figuring out why,
40 I kind of know why, but that's my opinion. I'm not
41 trained in such things as it were, but I was born and
42 raised there so I kind of got an inkling as to what's
43 happening. Until we know more I'll just bide my time
44 until -- you know, when somebody speaks up and say
45 something, I'll back them up if I know that's the way
46 it is.

47
48 Other than that there's been -- last
49 spring there was a lot of trout. They were feeding on
50

1 the little fry and they're just really delicious.
2 Oily, nice, beautiful. As many as you can get.

3
4 Other than that there was a lot of
5 bear. I think there's more bear in our area than moose
6 like Charles was saying. That's about it for our area.

7
8 MR. SEETOT: Good morning. Elmer
9 Seetot, Brevig Mission. Weather is still a big factor
10 in around our harvest area in different parts of the
11 season. It's been pretty cool summers along with wet
12 summers, but we had an abundant red salmon run during
13 this past summer. Maybe the second run that goes up to
14 Salmon Lake.

15
16 For me, personally, I'll still oppose
17 commercial fishing for red salmon because whenever you
18 have something that is in the economy bracket, then
19 people start arguing and then that still gets me to a
20 TEK, argue about the resources, they won't be there for
21 you. That's forever in the forefront in opposition to
22 commercial fishing. Even though it provides funds for
23 someone, it's still funds for someone, not the whole
24 community would benefit from commercial fishing for a
25 particular species.

26
27 We went caribou hunting in late winter,
28 late March probably, on the northern part of Seward
29 Peninsula in and around Ear Mountain toward Serpentine
30 Hot Springs. Still a lot of wolf activity in our area.
31 Like I mentioned before, I seen as many as four packs
32 within Imuruk Basin during the winter going after the
33 reindeer herd. Why? Because the reindeer are already
34 there. They don't need constant running after. So
35 that's how come there was four packs that were going on
36 the eastern portion of Imuruk Basin to access the
37 caribou.

38
39 These are some of what we're going
40 through climate changes. It's still being talked about,
41 but we're in the forefront and we're seeing these
42 changes right now. Last week I was able to see the
43 last of the Snow Geese in and around Imuruk Basin
44 before we had snow three days ago. Wolves were still
45 chasing the caribou -- I mean the reindeer herd about
46 two months ago, so that's the factor we have to look
47 at.

48
49 Other than that hopefully we'll be able
50

1 to change -- not change, but adapt to the changed
2 conditions when we go out and harvest. Also we contact
3 other communities when and where is the resource at in
4 order for our hunters to harvest them.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Uvlaalluataq.
9 Good morning. I'm Fred Eningowuk from Shishmaref. We
10 had a halfway decent spring for a spring hunt. You
11 know, we subsistence hunt marine mammals and land
12 mammals and whatnot. Because of climate change we're
13 having to get ready a month earlier than usual.
14 Whereas like 20 years ago it was normal to be getting
15 ready in May, but nowadays, because of climate change,
16 we're having to get ready in April, so that's just for
17 spring hunting.

18

19 For those of us that are able to go out
20 and hunt we got our share of oogruks. We didn't get
21 any walrus this year. Maybe one or two boats might
22 have gotten one. But during the course of the summer,
23 starting in August, we had some walrus that were
24 washing up on the beach with no bullet holes. Me and
25 my boy we counted, I think, 36 just between Ikpek and
26 Singeak, if you're familiar with my country. That's 36
27 with ivory, with tusks on there, and those walrus have
28 no bullet holes.

29

30 Something is going on out there in our
31 waters. Something is killing them and currently there
32 is no funding to do studies on them, so we need some
33 agencies to be looking at those to study those walrus,
34 why they're dying like that. This is the first year
35 this happened.

36

37 We had a pretty good year for red
38 salmon. This year is the first time I caught some red
39 salmon to put away, to smoke and to dry. So we had a
40 pretty decent fishing season. And we're blessed with
41 caribou hidden where we can get them all year round.
42 This has been going on for the last few years.

43

44 You know, our elders used to say our
45 caribou would come back and we listened to our elders,
46 their forecast, and they're pretty accurate. They've
47 been gone for many, many years and we didn't have
48 caribou for a while and they said they would come back.
49 Now they're back. Basically we've got them all year

50

1 round in our backyards and we're able to harvest what
2 we need, but we don't try to get more than what we
3 need. We're not that kind of people.

4
5 Berries. We had a pretty good season
6 for salmonberries. Maybe thanks to all the rain we
7 had. Blackberries, we hardly had not too much of that.

8
9 Like everybody else, you know, we still
10 got a lot of bears, too many bears, too many muskox.
11 Muskox introduced into our backyards, you know. We
12 never grew up with muskox, so they were introduced. I
13 heard a lot of complaints about them going into the
14 private property allotments and destroying the land.
15 Even one muskox that killed a dog at a camp, so I don't
16 know. If it was in Nome, it would be news, but in the
17 villages it's not, so it's just local news.

18
19 That's pretty much the only report I
20 have.

21
22 Thank you.

23
24 Next on the agenda is the service award
25 and we'll do that tomorrow. Move that to tomorrow.
26 Next we have public and tribal comment on non-agenda
27 items. Right now the floor is open for public and
28 tribal comments on non-agenda items.

29
30 (No comments)

31
32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Through the Chair.
33 It's an item that we don't have listed on the agenda.
34 In other words, this isn't the time to comment on
35 wildlife proposals, but if you have any other issues
36 that you'd like to bring before the Council that
37 perhaps is going on with Kawerak or anything in the
38 community, you're welcome to do so now.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: We'll move on
45 to old business and apparently we don't have any old
46 business. Moving on to new business and before we do
47 please bear with me. It's my first time chairing a
48 meeting.

49
50

1 On the new business we have wildlife
2 proposals. First Wildlife Proposal is 18-37, rescind
3 Federal lands closure for moose in Unit 22A remainder.
4 Suzanne Workers, wildlife biologist.

5
6 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
7 Suzanne Worker. I'm a wildlife biologist with the
8 Office of Subsistence Management and I'll be going over
9 the wildlife proposals today. The first one is WP18-37.
10 This proposal starts on Page 14 of your meeting
11 materials if you want to take a look at it.

12
13 This proposal was submitted by Lance
14 Kronberger, who is a guide out of Eagle River, and he
15 requests that the Federal
16 public lands closure in the Unit 22A remainder moose
17 hunt area be rescinded September 1st through September
18 30th. That is a period of time that coincides with the
19 State's nonresident season.

20
21 So this is the southernmost hunt area
22 in Unit 22A remainder. It's the area that's south of
23 the Golsovia River. It includes the area around
24 Stebbins and St. Michael.

25
26 So just a little bit of history. This
27 lands closure has been in place since 1995. You'll
28 notice that the pool of eligible users is smaller than
29 the pool of Federally qualified users. What I mean by
30 that is all residents of Unit 22 have a customary and
31 traditional use for moose in Unit 22A remainder, but
32 the closure stipulates that only residents of 22A can
33 hunt moose on Federal public lands in that area. This
34 is because the Board specified that when they initiated
35 the closure in 1995.

36
37 This request probably sounds familiar.
38 You heard it at your meeting earlier this spring as a
39 special action. It was WSA17-01 and the Board did
40 consider that special action in April and it was
41 rejected at that time.

42
43 Biologically, the difficulty with this
44 proposal is that moose surveys haven't occurred in Unit
45 22A remainder and the surrounding moose populations are
46 very different from one another. In central unit 22A
47 in the Unalakleet survey area, the moose densities have
48 improved, but they're still relatively low, at .35
49 moose per square mile. But if you get into Unit 21E to
50

1 the southeast, the moose densities are higher. They're
2 about two moose per square mile. If you go to the
3 south in Unit 18, they're higher still at almost five
4 moose per square mile.

5
6 At this point it's not unlikely that
7 some of those moose are coming up the drainages and
8 heading over the ridge into Unit 22. We don't really
9 know how much that's happening, but there is mounting
10 evidence that the population in Unit 22A remainder is
11 probably growing, but we can't quantify that.

12
13 So the reported harvest among non-
14 locals has increased in recent years while the local
15 reported harvest has declined. However, we know that
16 the reported harvest likely underestimates local
17 harvest and perhaps significantly so. For instance, in
18 2013 household surveys indicate that around 20 moose
19 were taken by residents of Stebbins, but none of those
20 were reported. So we know that harvest records aren't
21 a good indicator of local harvest in the area.

22
23 I also want to mention that the ADF&G
24 Subsistence Division has done some work with the
25 residents of this area to map out their search areas
26 for hunting moose. They report hunting primarily in
27 the middle and western portions of the hunt area and
28 this is where most of the Federal land is, up in those
29 drainages.

30
31 So if this lands closure is lifted,
32 moose hunting will be allowed on Federal public lands
33 by all users during the month of September which will
34 likely result in some additional harvest.

35
36 It's expected that a certain amount of
37 this would come from increased use of guides and
38 transporters and Fish and Wildlife Service, which
39 manages most of the Federal lands, has an exclusive
40 guide use system and some limits on transporters, so
41 there are some limits on the amount of commercial use
42 that can happen in that area. BLM does not limit guide
43 use or transporters and there is concern about the
44 demand for guiding in this area.

45
46 Given our limited understanding of the
47 moose dynamics in the area, there's also some
48 uncertainty about what the effect on the population
49 will be; however, it's expected that the population has
50

1 increased and that at least some additional harvest is
2 probably sustainable. The effect on subsistence users
3 is uncertain. As we heard this morning from Mr. Kirk,
4 subsistence users concerns about accessing moose tend
5 to be more related to being able to get to the moose
6 rather than not enough moose on the landscape. But
7 considering the spatial use patterns there is potential
8 for user conflict to develop in these areas.

9
10 So we believe that it might be
11 premature to open Federal public lands to all users
12 prior to opening them to all Federally qualified
13 subsistence users. So the OSM preliminary conclusion
14 is to support WP18-37 with modification to open Federal
15 public lands only to Federally qualified subsistence
16 users.

17
18 So what this means is it would open
19 Federal public lands to all residents of Unit 22.
20 Those lands are currently only open to residents of
21 Unit 22A. So this basically represents like a
22 step-wise approach to liberalizing the hunting in this
23 area.

24
25 That's all I have.

26
27 If you need more detail or you have
28 questions, I'll be happy to try to answer them.

29
30 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Kirk or
31 Tom.

32
33 MR. GRAY: Okay. So the recommendation
34 that I'm seeing here on Page 14 is not going to
35 accommodate the guides in opening September 1st to
36 30th?

37
38 MS. WORKER: That's correct, it doesn't
39 accommodate the guide.

40
41 MR. GRAY: Okay. I guess I'm very
42 concerned. We talked about this last year about this
43 proposal and we talked about harvest data. There was a
44 very confusing -- you know, the agencies came in with a
45 bunch of different numbers and it was confusing trying
46 to figure out how close we were to the harvestable
47 surplus. This is coming back again and I'm going to
48 throw it out if we're not understanding the harvest.

49
50

1 We need to be very careful to open it
2 up to guiding because I'm a guide and I'll tell you
3 what, we're aggressive people and we can't afford to
4 risk our resource unless we have a good surplus of it.
5 So, in my eyes, you guys need to get a handle on the
6 harvest data, you need to go flying and find out what
7 the resource is actually doing out there and have a
8 good handle on that before the guides get involved in
9 it.

10
11 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. You're
12 right, Mr. Gray. The uncertainty related to the
13 harvestable surplus it's related to both that we don't
14 have a good handle on harvest and we also don't have a
15 good handle on the population status. Either one of
16 those can make a difference on whether or not they're
17 surplus animals and there's uncertainty with both of
18 them.

19
20 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Leland.

21
22 MR. OYOUNICK: I think that Lance
23 Kronberger flies his people in. He's got a plane down
24 there. We don't have planes to fly that same area
25 where he goes. If he gets those moose way up there in
26 the hills and stops them from coming to our areas,
27 that's a big problem because there is hardly any moose
28 that -- moose come from Chirokey and South River.
29 There's some that come from down the coastway from St.
30 Michael.

31
32 If they cut them off before they get to
33 us, we're still going to be on a quota for how long.
34 Then we've got to give them a chance to get back on
35 their feet and be a healthy population before we can
36 allow guiding like Tom says. These folks can write off
37 these things like airplanes, boats, motors. Us people
38 as subsistence users we have to foot the bill, so
39 that's another thing to think about.

40
41 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair.

42
43 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Kirk.

44
45 MR. KIRK: I'm in favor of Tom and Mr.
46 Oyoumick's statement there. I do not want to see
47 guides coming into our area to harvest moose especially
48 if you have people coming from California or Montana
49 somewhere going out after trophies in our area. We
50

1 live off our moose but we do not like to go after moose
2 that has a 63-inch span because that meat is too tough
3 for us to eat. We like to get the ones that are
4 younger with a smaller span.

5
6 These guides come in and they harvest
7 moose and it's good that they bring the moose meat back
8 to the village for the community, but it's too hard for
9 a lot of the elders to chew on, so I'm not in favor of
10 trying to open up the remainder of 22A for guide
11 hunting in our area. Like Mr. Oyoumick states, if we
12 start that, we're going to cut off the moose from going
13 into his area from ours.

14
15 We get a lot of the moose -- when the
16 wildfires start in Alaska, the moose come down to our
17 area and then they start expanding from there. They go
18 down the Yukon and up towards Golsovia and Unalakleet
19 area. With all these wildfires that we had this summer
20 we had about six moose on St. Michael Island that
21 didn't move all summer and they finally left when the
22 wildfires were gone. They finally left like months
23 ago.

24
25 I wouldn't recommend that we try to get
26 guide service in our area.

27
28 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

29
30 MR. GRAY: Again, I'm a guide, so I'm
31 one of those bad guys that go out and do stuff, but to
32 speak on my behalf I'm a bear guide. I don't guide for
33 moose at this point. I kill bears, so I'm your friend,
34 I guess.

35
36 The thing that I tried to point out
37 earlier is if the guides are going to get involved in
38 hunting in our areas, we need to ensure a couple of
39 things. Number one, there's enough resource to include
40 the guides in that hunt. You know, you just heard
41 these guys talking about we need to ensure our
42 subsistence hunt and our lifestyles here in the
43 villages are taken care of prior to guides getting
44 involved in hunting in our areas.

45
46 I personally think there's a time and a
47 place for guides to be guiding, but I think our people
48 need to be taken care of first and foremost. We need
49 to understand that resource by flying and doing surveys
50

1 and recognizing where the animals are coming through,
2 where they're coming from, what's the size of the
3 resource, et cetera.

4
5 On one hand I beat up on the guides,
6 but on the other hand if the resource is stable enough
7 for guides to be involved, I will urge that.

8
9 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
10 Tom. Do we have reports on Board consultation, tribes
11 and ANCSA corporations.

12
13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. Members of
14 the Council. This is Karen Deatherage. There were no
15 consultation reports on this proposal.

16
17 Thank you.

18
19 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Agency
20 comments. ADF&G, Federal and tribal.

21
22 MR. DUNKER: Good morning, everybody.
23 My name is Bill Dunker with Fish and Game here today.
24 I really don't have much more to add to what Suzanne
25 already presented here. Obviously we have some
26 limitations in the area in terms of our understanding
27 of what that -- what moose populations in that area
28 might be based on kind of the broad spectrum of moose
29 densities that we find elsewhere in the surrounding
30 areas.

31
32 Looking forward, we obviously have that
33 area kind of on our list of things to do as time and
34 resources allow to get down there and take a look at
35 where we are relative to these other areas surrounding
36 the remainder of 22A, so hopefully in the future we'll
37 have more to report on that.

38
39 Again, the Department, as it stands
40 right now, is neutral on this proposal. If there's
41 anything I can do to clarify any of these issues or
42 topics or whatnot, I'd be happy to take your questions.

43
44 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

45
46 MR. GRAY: The lands that this guy is
47 trying to open up, the State must have lands next to
48 that. Are they open to that hunting guide or are they
49 closed to that hunting guide?

50

1 MR. DUNKER: That's a good point, Tom.
2 There is State managed lands within the remainder of
3 Unit 22A where hunting opportunity is currently
4 available for both non-local users as well as non-
5 resident users. So there is a certain level of
6 non-resident harvest coming out of that area as it
7 stands right now.

8
9 Changes to restrictions associated with
10 Federally qualified subsistence users in the area and
11 what kind of an impact that might have on either an
12 increase in harvest or a redistribution of harvest. We
13 don't have a real clear understanding of that right
14 now.

15
16 You are correct, there is currently
17 opportunity for both non-local and non-resident hunters
18 to pursue moose in the remainder of Unit 22A.

19
20 MR. GRAY: Do we have an idea of the
21 numbers of animals that are taken out of that area, out
22 of your 22A, whatever we're talking about here?

23
24 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. I can
25 answer maybe part of that question. So Mr. Kronberger
26 is currently guiding on State lands adjacent to Federal
27 lands in Unit 22A remainder. He's also guiding on
28 Federal lands in Unit 18. Right now the guide use
29 concession for the Fish and Wildlife Service in Unit 18
30 and the southern part of Unit 22A I think it limits him
31 to six moose per year out of that guide use area on
32 Fish and Wildlife Service lands. Beginning next year
33 they increase that to eight.

34
35 So he is using the area. He's probably
36 going to start using it more. So that doesn't give you
37 an answer about how many moose are coming out of Unit
38 22A remainder, but that's what's happening on the
39 adjacent Federal lands with that guide.

40
41 MR. GRAY: The adjacent State lands.
42 What I'm trying to get a feel for is this guy is trying
43 to open up some certain land in 22A and there's
44 obviously land around it. If he's operating on the
45 land around it, let's say in 18 and 22, what is he
46 taking? Somebody must know these numbers. If there's
47 an increase going to happen automatically because of an
48 increase of animals from six to eight in some area --
49 the six to eight, is that in Federal lands or is that

50

1 in State lands or both?

2

3 MS. WORKER: The increase from six to
4 eight is on -- it's called Andreafsky Guide Use Unit or
5 something like that that's managed by the Yukon Delta
6 National Wildlife Refuge. I can tell you that in Unit
7 22A remainder there were six moose taken by
8 non-residents in three of the last four years. I don't
9 know if they were all taken by his guided clients or if
10 there are other guides in there.

11

12 MR. OYOUMICK: Each year? Is that each
13 year that.....

14

15 MS. WORKER: Each year, yes. That's an
16 annual amount.

17

18 MR. GRAY: So we're talking a potential
19 of 14 animals each year? If this area goes to eight,
20 there could be a potential of 14 animals. This
21 includes the State, the 14 animals, or is that just
22 Federal lands?

23

24 MS. WORKER: Well, Federal lands are
25 closed, so that's happening on State land. Those six
26 came from State lands. So opening up Federal lands,
27 yes, there is a potential to increase harvest in Unit
28 22A.

29

30 MR. GRAY: Okay. I'm sorry, I'm
31 confused here. In 22, he's operating on State lands.

32

33 MS. WORKER: That's correct.

34

35 MR. GRAY: In 18, he's operating on
36 Federal lands.

37

38 MS. WORKER: That's correct.

39

40 MR. GRAY: And between the two right
41 now he's taken -- he has the opportunity to take 12
42 animals right now today.

43

44 MS. WORKER: Well, I'm not sure that's
45 a fair characterization because on -- I don't know how
46 the concession on the State side works, but I'm not
47 sure that there's a limit to the number of moose he can
48 take. Under his Federal agreement he's limited to six
49 on Federal lands in Unit 18. If he were to expand into

50

1 southern unit 22A, his limit does not increase. That
2 Andraefsky Guide Use Unit includes northern Unit 18 and
3 southern Unit 22A. He just wants to get his camp into
4 Unit 22A. Out of Unit 18 into 22A.

5

6 MR. GRAY: Thank you.

7

8 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you. At
9 this time I'll call for advisory group comments, other
10 Regional Councils.

11

12 MS. WORKER: Mr. Chair. No other
13 Regional Advisory Councils have taken action on WP18-
14 37.

15

16 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Fish and Game
17 Advisory Committees.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Moving on.
22 Subsistence Resource Commissions.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.

27

28 Summary of written public comments.

29

30 Karen.

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no written
34 comments for WP18-37.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
39 public comments, public testimonies. Anybody on the
40 phone or public.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I believe we
45 have no public testimony. Next is Regional Council
46 recommendations.

47

48 Motion to adopt.

49

50

1 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair. Can I ask one
2 more question before we adopt this?

3
4 MS. DEATHERAGE: This has been the time
5 to ask questions of the analysts, but after the motion
6 is made and seconded that's the time for Council
7 discussion, which is also a time when you can ask
8 questions.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 MR. OYOUMICK: So moved.

13
14 MR. GRAY: So move.

15
16 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I believe that
17 was Leland that did the motion to adopt.

18
19 MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah.

20
21 MR. GRAY: Second.

22
23 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Seconded by
24 Tom.

25
26 Question.

27
28 MR. KIRK: Question. Once this gets --
29 there's already a motion. How will this affect the
30 remainder of 22A as subsistence users for our people?
31 Like in your hunting regulations here we're allowed one
32 bull moose for September 1st to the 30th and this guy
33 is trying to get into 22A from Unit 18.

34
35 How will that affect our harvest?

36
37 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. So the
38 proposal that we're talking about only deals with Unit
39 22A remainder, so that's only the area in Unit 22A
40 south of the Golsovia River, so it won't affect the
41 rest of Unit 22A. The regulations that I just saw you
42 reference are the State regulations. So in addition to
43 that residents of Stebbins and St. Michael and any
44 other communities in Unit 22A can have additional
45 opportunities to hunt.

46
47 So there's an August 1st to September
48 30th season and there's also a January 1st to February
49 15th season. So those are in this book. I don't know
50

1 if you guys have a copy of that in front of you. But
2 the State regulations, which are the blue book, are
3 more restrictive than the Federal regulations. So as
4 Federally qualified subsistence users you are able to
5 hunt under the regulations in this book, which in this
6 case are more generous than the State regulation
7 resident hunting seasons.

8

9

MR. KIRK: Thank you.

10

11

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

12

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MR. GRAY: I just want to be clear on
what I'm voting on here. I just realized this proposal
came from Lance, but it talks about the area being
rescinded September 1st to September 30th. So he
obviously wants to open up that area in 22A so he can
come in on Federal lands. OSM says let's support it
with a modification and the modification is Federal
qualified users, subsistence users. What does that do
to his request to open up September 1st to September
30th?

MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. So our
modification eliminates those September dates, so we're
suggesting that we open the Federal lands to Federally
qualified subsistence users, so that's all residents of
Unit 22 year round. So that means that the folks that
can currently hunt who live in Unit 22A there's three
seasons -- well, there's two seasons, August 1st
through September 30th and January 1st through February
15th. All residents of Unit 22 will be able to take
advantage of those seasons.

Now if the Council is uncomfortable
with that, you can certainly make a modification of
your own. One of the things that I didn't get into in
my presentation is that rescinding that Federal public
lands closure only for the month of September makes
things a little bit complicated for local users because
they're going to be able to use Federal lands during
September but not during August and not during the
winter season.

That was probably confusing, wasn't it?

Sorry about that.

MR. GRAY: If I could jump in here.

1 Maybe it's already answered. I'm not clear on the
2 motion that we put forward, number one. Number two,
3 I'm not interested in opening up Federal lands in 22
4 until you guys are comfortable in your harvest data and
5 you've done a good survey and you can come to this
6 board and say, yep, we have extra animals, we're
7 willing to go forward and open it up to a guide. Those
8 are two things I feel you haven't accomplished here.

9
10 Again, I'm not sure what the motion
11 actually reads that we've -- you know, I'm comfortable
12 with the Federally qualified users of 22, but again I
13 don't want to adopt something that lets a guide come
14 into our Federal lands until the questions I've thrown
15 out are answered.

16
17 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Gray, through
18 the Chair. What the Council has done is a basic motion
19 to adopt 18-37. They have three options for that
20 motion. They can reject it in whole so basically they
21 will go forth as opposing 18-37. They can approve it
22 and that would open up that region to non-resident
23 guide hunting in that unit. They could accept the
24 modification that has been put forth by the Office of
25 Subsistence Management to open the area up to all
26 Federally qualified users in Unit 22 versus the current
27 restrictions that are on the users in that region.
28 Actually, number four, you could come up with your own
29 modification if you were not satisfied with the one
30 that OSM has put forth as a recommendation.

31
32 So is that clear that those are the
33 options on the table for the Council right now? If you
34 need further clarification, just let me know. Thanks.

35
36 MR. GRAY: Okay. It's clear on our
37 options, but if we go forward and vote on this thing
38 and I want OSM's recommendation considered and adopted,
39 how do I make sure that's what we're voting on? Right
40 now, the way I understand it, the motion is this
41 opening up September 1st to 30th.

42
43 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Gray.
44 Through the Chair. What the Council would do is go
45 ahead and motion to amend the proposal and accept the
46 OSM recommendation to open up to all Federally
47 qualified users. So you would amend the current motion
48 on the floor to accept the recommendation from OSM to
49 open it up to all Federally qualified users.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair.

4

5 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Kirk.

6

7 MR. KIRK: I have a question. Once we
8 open up these Federal lands to this guide that wants to
9 go from Unit 18 to 22, what does that do to the
10 harvesting of 22A for the Unalakleet area who can only
11 harvest from September 1st to September 20th and you're
12 trying to enter this proposal to open the remainder of
13 22A from September 1st to September 30th. That does
14 not seem fair to the residents from Unalakleet and
15 Shaktoolik within that 22A area that we're opening up
16 this land for this person to come off from Unit 18 to
17 22A to harvest after September 20th.

18

19 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. If I
20 understand your question correctly, so this proposal
21 will have no effect on the regulations for the hunt
22 area in the Unalakleet drainage. It won't change that
23 at all. Now residents from Unalakleet can come down to
24 the Stebbins/St. Michael area and hunt moose in the
25 Unit 22A remainder including on Federal lands.

26

27 So if this proposal passes, that will
28 not change. The only thing that will change is now
29 residents of the state of Alaska and non-residents will
30 also be able to hunt on Federal lands in that area.
31 Does that answer your question?

32

33 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair. Almost. My
34 concern is -- you're saying that the residents of
35 Unalakleet can come down past the Golsovia drainage to
36 remainder of Unit 22A to harvest moose. Would that
37 affect their -- it says that they can only harvest up
38 to September 20th. Can that be change to September
39 30th if they're going to be able to come down to the
40 remainder of 22A?

41

42 If they come down to the remainder of
43 22A after September 20th and harvest a moose, my
44 concern is that they're going to be brought before the
45 Fish and Game. They're going to walk in there and say
46 I'm sorry we have to confiscate your harvest because
47 you went out and got it after September 20th.

48

49 MS. WORKER: Okay. If they're hunting

50

1 their moose in the Unalakleet hunt area, they can only
2 hunt through September 20th. I think you're right. If
3 they go outside of that hunt area and they go south of
4 the Golsovia River, they are still eligible to hunt
5 until September 30th.

6
7 The regulation isn't written for where
8 the person lives, it's where the person hunts. So they
9 can still hunt through September 30th if they're south
10 of the Golsovia River. The proposal that we're talking
11 about has no bearing on that. That's not going to
12 change. That's the way it is now and that's the way it
13 will be regardless of what happens with this proposal.

14
15 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair.

16
17 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes.

18
19 MR. KIRK: I still have a problem with
20 that because they'll be harvesting a moose after
21 September 20th from the remainder of 22A, but once they
22 get back to their village they're going to be
23 approached by the Alaska State Troopers, Fish and Game,
24 saying that you harvest a moose after September 20th.

25
26 MS. WORKER: So it sounds to me that
27 you're expressing a concern about law enforcement. I
28 mean that shouldn't be a problem because in the
29 Unalakleet drainage you have to have a registration
30 permit to hunt a moose. In Unit 22A, you don't. You're
31 supposed to report by harvest ticket. So as long as
32 you're reporting where you harvested your moose and
33 when, you should be okay.

34
35 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Kirk.

36
37 MR. KIRK: So it would be okay -- if I
38 was from Unalakleet, it would be okay for me to go to
39 St. Michael and Stebbins and purchase a harvest ticket
40 for remainder of 22A, harvest a moose and bring it back
41 to Unalakleet.

42
43 MS. WORKER: That is legal, yes.

44
45 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

46
47 MR. GRAY: Okay. I'm sitting here
48 fidgeting because I want to make a motion before we
49 adopt this thing and we've got a guide in the area that
50

1 we don't want. So I make a motion that we amend this
2 proposal with OSM's amended modification.

3
4 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by Tom
5 to amend the motion with OSM's preliminary conclusion.

6
7 MR. KIRK: Second.

8
9 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
10 Kirk.

11
12 Question.

13
14 MR. GRAY: Let me explain. The reason
15 I made that motion is so we can lock up the Federal
16 lands just to Federally qualified users. That means no
17 outside people other than people in Unit 22 will be
18 able to hunt in there. People from Anchorage couldn't
19 hunt. People from Fairbanks, from anywhere, couldn't
20 hunt on Federal lands. They can hunt on State lands,
21 but not on Federal lands.

22
23 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
24 Tom.

25
26 All those in favor of the motion say
27 aye.

28
29 IN UNISON: Aye.

30
31 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
32 opposed.

33
34 (No opposing votes)

35
36 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion passes
37 to adopt.

38
39 MR. GRAY: Okay. We still have the
40 motion that we have to vote on.

41
42 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I need a
43 motion to support the amendment to roll call vote. I
44 apologize. To support the proposal as amended.

45
46 MR. GRAY: There's a motion on the
47 floor and there's a second already. So all we have to
48 do is vote on it.

49
50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. Bear
2 with me. All those in favor of the motion signify by
3 saying aye.

4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6
7 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
8 opposed.

9
10 (No opposing votes)

11
12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion
13 carried.

14
15 MR. GRAY: Suzanne, at the last meeting
16 I asked for answers to some questions. Again, the
17 harvest data was a big one. If we could get at the
18 next meeting answers on the harvest data, I'd surely
19 like to see that. You know, we're making decisions on
20 a resource in the blind without good data. You know,
21 what I just did was lock up that area so there's no
22 change in the hunting. But we still need -- if this
23 guide -- he's going to be persistent. He's going to
24 keep coming back. If we're going to open it up to that
25 guide, and we will be forced to someday, we need good
26 answers here.

27
28 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Gray.
29 Through the Chair. I agree with you and I know that
30 you want more information. We want more information.
31 One of the bottlenecks with reporting, frankly, with
32 harvest reporting, is that we don't get harvest
33 reports. Unless we know what's happening out there, it
34 hampers our ability to make decisions about it. So
35 that's a good reason to return those harvest tickets to
36 ADF&G.

37
38 I've been hearing from Bill and others
39 that this area is beginning to rise a little bit
40 because now there's attention and there's interest in
41 it. Everybody knows that there's a finite amount of
42 money to survey a seemingly infinite amount of land.
43 So I think this area is maybe going to get a little bit
44 more attention in the future because, just like you
45 said, this guy is probably not going to stop.

46
47 So I appreciate your concerns.

48
49 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I see
50

1 everybody kind of getting up. I'll call for a 10-
2 minute break.

3

4 (Off record)

5

6 (On record)

7

8 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Let's regroup
9 here. Before moving on on the agenda I'd like to
10 recognize Brandon Ahmasuk joining our meeting and if he
11 has any Council comments, give him this opportunity.

12

13 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 Brandon Ahmasuk. Sorry I was a little bit late. I had
15 a follow-up doctor's appointment for my sinus surgery I
16 had about a month and a half ago.

17

18 I'm just trying to think over the
19 summer, spring, even the fall. This last spring we had
20 quite a few migratory birds wash up dead. That
21 continued into the fall. Quite a few here in Nome.
22 Lots on St. Lawrence Island. Golovin had some. I
23 can't remember if it was St. Michael or Stebbins also
24 had some. So region-wide we've had migratory birds
25 washing up dead.

26

27 We've sent them off for testing. At
28 first the results came back that the birds were
29 emaciated. Basically they were starving to death.
30 However, Gay Sheffield got some of the results back
31 from some of the more recent birds and they did test
32 positive for paralytic shellfish poisoning.

33

34 That will kind of lead me into my next
35 comments. So recently we've also had a bunch of walrus
36 wash up dead and nobody really knew what was going on
37 with those either. However, it's my understanding that
38 Gay Sheffield did get some of the test results back
39 from some of those samples that were sent off and the
40 walrus also tested positive for paralytic shellfish
41 poisoning.

42

43 To me this is a big concern for not
44 just our region but all coastal communities. We're all
45 very heavily reliant upon the sea for what she
46 provides. In the past -- it is scary, not that I want
47 to cause region-wide panic, but other places they test
48 for this. Our people have the right to know what's
49 going on with our resource.

50

1 At Norton Sound we've even asked if
2 they're going to start testing for this and they said
3 no. Well, why aren't you? Because we don't want to
4 cause a scare. I don't look at it that way. I look at
5 it as knowledge. With climate change, times are
6 changing. It's really a big scare. Some of you are
7 talking multiple species of migratory birds, marine
8 mammals. Not just walrus, we had a minke whale wash up
9 in Wales a few years ago also tested positive for PSP.

10
11 I guess my question to that is why
12 isn't the managers of this resource stepping up to the
13 plate and taking charge and actually wanting to test
14 these animals or test the waters and/or the shellfish
15 that these resources also depend on. Again, it is
16 scary, but the more we know the better off we'll be.

17
18 Other than that the summer pretty much
19 -- I don't think I really heard any complaints about
20 fishing for salmon. Salmon was pretty good all over.
21 It sounded like the moose hunt was pretty good this
22 year. I didn't go myself. I dislocated my shoulder
23 this last winter.

24
25 Other than that I don't think I have
26 anything else, Mr. Chair.

27
28 Thank you.

29
30 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
31 Brandon. Echoing back on that on the walrus. Like I
32 stated earlier, we had 36 with the heads from Ikpek to
33 Singeak. Thanks to the Coast Guard who are based at
34 Kotzebue, they gave us an opportunity for a couple
35 individuals to get some samples from some walrus to be
36 sent out. So the Coast Guard being based in Kotzebue
37 it's already helping our coastal communities. We had a
38 lot of traffic with the Coast Guard doing their
39 service this summer.

40
41 But moving forward we have an
42 additional guest on the floor. I'd like to have
43 introductions for the late arrivals.

44
45 MR. GUSSE: Good morning. Thank you
46 very much for giving me a chance to introduce myself.
47 My name is Walker Gusse. I'm with the Bureau of Land
48 Management. Just making rounds, saying hi to
49 everybody. I was hired about a year ago from the Park

50

1 Service. I was here in Nome for about the last five
2 years. Southeast Alaska in Skagway for the five years
3 before that. Spent some time in Glennallen and worked
4 up north in Anaktuvuk Pass a little and kind of bounced
5 around the state with the Park Service.

6
7 I'm familiar with some of the concerns
8 with subsistence use and just mostly here to represent
9 the BLM today. You work a lot closer with Tom Sparks,
10 I think. Yeah, see what I can do to help you. That's
11 what I'm here for.

12
13 So that's about it.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: You're
18 welcome. Do we have anybody else on the floor.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Anybody else
23 on the phone, introductions.

24
25 MR. SHARP: This is Dan Sharp with BLM
26 in Anchorage.

27
28 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you for
29 joining us.

30
31 (No comments)

32
33 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. Moving
34 on on the agenda we have Wildlife Proposal 18-38,
35 rescind Federal land closure for moose in portion of
36 Unit 22.

37
38 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39 This is Suzanne Worker again. WP18-38 begins on Page
40 38 of your materials appropriately. This is another
41 proposal submitted by Lance Kronberger and he requests
42 that the Federal public lands closure in the portion of
43 Unit 22A north of and including the Tagoomenik and
44 Shaktoolik river drainages be rescinded September 1st
45 to September 20th, again to coincide with the State's
46 nonresident moose season.

47
48 So this is the northernmost hunt area
49 in Unit 22A. Like the closure that we just talked
50

1 about, the moose harvest on Federal public lands is
2 restricted to residents of Unit 22A even though
3 residents of Unit 22 have C&T.

4
5 Like that last closure we talked about,
6 it was initiated in 1995. It's worth noting that in
7 January 2017 the State Board of Game added six days to
8 what was previously a 14-day non-resident season in
9 this hunt area, so the harvest restrictions have
10 already been liberalized in this hunt area recently.

11
12 Unlike the proposal for Unit 22A
13 remainder, the Unalakleet moose population surveys are
14 expected to be the best representation of the moose
15 dynamics in the area, so there's less uncertainty
16 associated with the moose population, I think.

17
18 In that survey area, the moose
19 population is estimated to be 840 moose, which is near
20 the upper bound of the State's management objective of
21 600 to 800 moose, but it's still a relatively low
22 density population of .35 moose per square mile.

23
24 The reported harvest is estimated to be
25 10 to 15 moose annually. That's about two to four
26 percent of the population. Local biologists believe
27 that the harvest is at an appropriate level for this
28 population and they don't recommend more than a five or
29 six percent harvest rate without a better understanding
30 of the population dynamics in this hunt area. So if we
31 do the math, the most conservative calculation of
32 harvestable surplus is an additional five moose
33 annually, so that's not too many.

34
35 If this proposal is adopted, Federal
36 public lands in the Unit 22A north moose hunt area will
37 be opened to all users September 1st through September
38 20th, which again coincides with the State's
39 nonresident season, and which may result in additional
40 harvest and may have a detrimental effect on the moose
41 population.

42
43 So the OSM preliminary conclusion is to
44 oppose WP18-38.

45
46 I'll be happy to take questions from
47 the Council if there are any.

48
49 MR. GRAY: I have a question. Sorry.

50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

2

3 MR. GRAY: So, if I remember right, the
4 majority of the lands over there are Federal lands and
5 there's not much State lands close by, is that true?

6

7 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. Yeah,
8 there's a lot of BLM land there. There's some coastal
9 land that's non-Federal, but it's a lot of Federal
10 land.

11

12 MR. GRAY: That being said, being at
13 the high end of the carrying capacity, I guess, if we
14 had a bad winter of snow, let's say, we could lose five
15 moose easily or 15 moose easily because of snow
16 conditions. So I kind of feel for this guide because
17 in one sense, you know, everybody is saying the
18 carrying capacity is this, the harvestable surplus is
19 this and he's at the peak of that and I know the vote
20 is going to come down to too bad.

21

22 It's a hard thing to chew on, I guess.

23

24 Anyway.

25

26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any more
27 questions from the Council.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
32 Reports on Board consultation, tribes, ANCSA
33 corporations.

34

35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no comments on
37 the consultation from tribes or ANCSA corporations on
38 this proposal.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Agency
43 comments. ADF&G, Federal, tribal.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: No comments.
48 Advisory group comments, other Regional Council, Fish
49 and Game Advisory Committee, Subsistence Resource

50

1 Commission.

2

3 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 This is Suzanne Worker. No other Regional Advisory

5 Councils have taken action on WP18-38.

6

7 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.

8 Summary of written public comments.

9

10 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no written public
12 comments received on this proposal 18-38.

13

14 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,

15 Karen.

16

17 Public testimony.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.

22 Regional Council recommendations. Motion to adopt.

23

24 Yes, Tom.

25

26 MR. GRAY: I have a question for
27 somebody prior to making a motion. I guess I'm a
28 little surprised that we haven't heard from the tribes
29 in the area that's being affected. I'm not so sure
30 that the last proposal that dealt with I don't think we
31 heard from the tribes.

32

33 The question I have is are the villages
34 being educated on this proposal prior to this meeting
35 or do people understand what could happen here if we
36 vote a certain way how it could impact them? Are
37 people being notified?

38

39 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 Carl Johnson, OSM. Through the Chair. So we have a
41 fairly multi-layered process where we try to do
42 outreach to tribes and ANCSA corporations to let them
43 know when there's going to be consultation
44 opportunities. We do it kind of in phases where we'll
45 do a certain group of regions at once and other regions
46 so we're not just doing them all at the same time.

47

48 Our Native liaison, Orville Lind, does
49 outreach, phone, fax, email. The Council coordinators

50

1 for their regions also do outreach and lets tribes and
2 ANCSA corporations know the opportunity. Unfortunately
3 the way the budget is we can't go out to each village.
4 We have to have these teleconferences and I know it's
5 not ideally the best way that the people like to
6 communicate, but it's what we have available.

7
8 So there is fairly extensive outreach
9 done. Typically we do get a fairly low level of
10 involvement in these consultation opportunities. My
11 experience is what will typically drive involvement in
12 the consultation if it's something that's really kind
13 of a highly-controversial issue that will bring in
14 involvement.

15
16 Just like you'll see with the public
17 comments. You're going to see a lot of these proposals
18 don't have written public comments because a lot of
19 them just aren't highly controversial.
20 So we're always looking for ways to improve our
21 outreach on tribal and ANCSA consultation.

22
23 MR. GRAY: You saw the last proposal
24 and how controversial it was at this table. You know,
25 again, I lived in a village for 30 years and I know how
26 important it is to have that resource for that village.
27 You know, a fax and a follow-up phone call is nothing
28 for you guys to do to make sure let's say Shaktoolik
29 understands what's going to happen in the river if
30 things go the way this guide wants them to.

31
32 So I urge whoever, whoever it is,
33 State, Feds, whoever, if there's changes, we need to
34 talk to the people somehow.

35
36 Thank you.

37
38 MR. JOHNSON: Just to follow up on that
39 too, Tom. One of the things I know that all the
40 coordinators do is if there's something that is really
41 important that they think that villages in your region
42 need to hear about, I do know they share that with you
43 and I hope that Council Members can also help us get
44 the word out to your villages so if you know, for
45 example, that there is something that you know the
46 people might be interested in.

47
48 Again, it's kind of a combination of
49 overload for a lot of folks. One of the things I do
50

1 hear at a lot of these meetings too is that the
2 villages are just overloaded with the amount of
3 information because of all the various different
4 activities between the State and the Federal agencies,
5 so I understand for them too a lot of times it's hard
6 for them to keep track of everything and prioritize.

7
8 So whatever we can all do together to
9 help them prioritize and understand opportunities is
10 always very welcome.

11
12 Thank you.

13
14 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yeah, thank
15 you on that. Just a comment on that. I did put
16 several proposals in this RAC here and I did it through
17 the blessing of our tribal council, so I let them be
18 aware of the recommendations on several proposals here.
19 So you as Council Members can also do that or do it
20 just by talking. There's Facebook and everything out
21 there too also.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 Yes, Brandon.

26
27 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
28 needed some clarification. I wasn't sure if I heard
29 this particular moose population in that Shaktoolik
30 area. It's expected to be on the rise or we know for
31 sure it is on the rise? I don't know if that's a
32 question for Suzanne or Fish and Game. Again, I just
33 need clarification on what I thought I heard.

34
35 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. I
36 might let Fish and Game comment on the character of
37 that moose population. They certainly have probably a
38 more nuanced understanding than I do.

39
40 MR. DUNKER: Through the Chair. Bill
41 Dunker with Fish and Game. So the moose survey that we
42 completed this past spring was conducted in the central
43 portion of Unit 22A, so that would include all the
44 drainages of the Unalakleet River drainage. We
45 typically don't conduct a GSPE survey within the
46 Shaktoolik and the Tagoomenik River drainages
47 themselves, but just given the character of the habitat
48 in that northern portion is very similar to what we
49 find in the central portion around the Unalakleet

50

1 River.

2

3

4 So, as Suzanne mentioned, that seems to
5 be our best source of information for what moose
6 populations in the northern portion are likely to be
7 doing. I got the chance to spend some time in
8 Shaktoolik last summer and the general consensus for
9 most folks that I talked to in the area seem to suggest
10 that the population in that area has increased. They
11 see more moose and that kind of a thing.

12

13

14 Those are kind of our general
15 understanding of what's happening in that neck of the
16 woods again based on anecdotal evidence from the
17 community members themselves as well as population
18 information from adjoining areas with similar habitat.

19

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ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, sir.

MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair. My concern is
like Tom stated. We need to notify the villages of
what changes you're making within our area because I
feel that if you get a hold of our non-profits in our
regions, not only in this Seward Peninsula Region but
all over because you have proposals coming up all over
the state, you get a hold of our non-profits, like
Kawerak, and have them notify their tribal
coordinators, I think you'd have more information given
out to the public to get comments on issues like this.

A lot of these proposals that come
before us we make decisions, but we're not really
getting the feedback from the communities on how they
feel about these proposals. We'd like to hear from
them and either support what they're requesting or
support the proposal or not support it if they don't
want it because this is our resource and our
livelihood.

Thank you.

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any other
questions, comments.

(No comments)

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: If not, we
need a motion to adopt.

1 MR. GRAY: So moved.

2
3 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by Tom.

4
5
6 MR. KIRK: Second.

7
8 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
9 Ronald. Question.

10
11 MR. SEETOT: Mr. Chair. Voting yes
12 would rescind his proposal and opposing it would keep
13 it as it is the way I understand it.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: If there's no
18 further discussion, all those in favor of the motion
19 signify by saying aye.

20
21 (No aye votes)

22
23 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
24 opposed.

25
26 IN UNISON: Aye.

27
28 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion failed
29 to adopt WP18-38. Next we have Wildlife Proposal 18-
30 39, align State and Federal seasons and harvest limits
31 for brown bears in Unit 22B.

32
33 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 This is Suzanne Worker again. WP18-39 begins on Page
35 51 of your meeting materials.

36
37 This Council submitted this proposal
38 requesting that the harvest limit for brown bears in
39 Unit 22B be increased from one to two bears. The
40 rationale is that earlier this year the Alaska Board of
41 Game increased the harvest limit for residents to two
42 bears per year in State regulation, so changing it in
43 Federal regulation would reduce the regulatory
44 complexity and ease user
45 confusion.

46
47 There hasn't been a unit-wide estimate
48 for the Unit 22 brown bear population since the 1990s,
49 but there were surveys conducted between 2013 and 2015

50

1 and this was working out a new survey methodology and
2 population estimation technique.

3
4 These surveys were limited to the
5 central portion of the Seward Peninsula, basically from
6 the Bering Land Bridge National Preserve south to
7 Norton Sound. Within this survey there was about one
8 bear per 10 square miles. So overall observations
9 indicate that the Unit 22 bear population remains
10 productive.

11
12 Within Unit 22B annual reported harvest
13 has averaged 22 bears since 1998 with about 42 percent
14 of those taken by residents of Unit 22 on average.
15 Typically the most harvest occurs in Unit 22B west of
16 the Darby Mountains.

17
18 Approximately 63 percent of the
19 reported brown bear harvest in Unit 22B between 1998
20 and 2015 were males. So that exceeds the harvest
21 objective established by the Alaska Department of Fish
22 and Game to maintain a harvest of at least 50 percent
23 males.

24
25 Adoption of this proposal will align
26 Federal and State harvest limits although the salvage
27 and sealing requirements will remain different. There
28 isn't expected to be a substantial effect on the Unit
29 22 bear population given that the changes are already
30 allowed under State regulation.

31
32 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
33 support WP18-39.

34
35 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36
37 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
38 Reports on Board consultation, tribe, ANCSA
39 corporation.

40
41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 There were no comments from the board consultation
43 through tribes or ANCSA corporations on Proposal 18-39.

44
45 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
46 Karen. Agency comments. ADF&G, Federal, tribal.

47
48 (No comments)

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
2 Advisory group comments, other Regional Council, Fish
3 and Game Advisory Committees, Subsistence Resource
4 Commission.

5
6 MS. WORKER: Mr. Chair. This is
7 Suzanne Worker. No other Regional Advisory Councils
8 have taken action on WP18-39.

9
10 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
11 Summary of written comments, public comments.

12
13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no written public
15 comments received for Proposal 18-39.

16
17 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
18 Public testimony.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Anybody on the
23 phone.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
28 Regional Council recommendations.

29
30 Motion to adopt.

31
32 Yes, Tom.

33
34 MR. GRAY: Just to get started I'll
35 move to adopt.

36
37 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by Tom
38 to adopt.

39
40 MR. AHMASUK: I second.

41
42 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
43 Brandon.

44
45 Question. Yes, Tom.

46
47 MR. GRAY: For Tom Gray this is kind of
48 a controversial vote here because I am a guide. This
49 proposal is going to go through and I understand that

50

1 and I'm probably going to vote in favor of it just to
2 get rid of the confusion of, yeah, I can shoot two
3 bears right here and five steps over there I can only
4 shoot one and I don't want to see that happen.

5
6 You know, this two bears a year, again
7 it went through the Board of Game and it went a long
8 ways. I was amazed how far it went without validation
9 or without understanding what that resource is doing.

10
11 I'll make one other comment. I spent
12 five weeks hunting this fall. A total of five weeks I
13 saw sows and cubs almost every day. The most cubs I
14 saw was three cubs with one sow two different times. I
15 saw one cub with a sow several times. But in five weeks
16 I bet I did not see 10 lone bears. I used to see that
17 in one week. There's a change in the population.

18
19 I've been saying this for a couple
20 years. Some of you guys sitting in the audience you've
21 heard me say this time and time again, go do a bear
22 survey. If you're going to change a resource, how
23 we're handling the resource, let's understand that
24 resource before we change it.

25
26 Again, I'll probably vote in favor of
27 this just to get rid of confusion, but I don't agree
28 with the original proposal that went through the Board
29 of Game last year going to two bears a year. I don't
30 believe that resource is structured the same as it has
31 been in the past.

32
33 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
34 Tom.

35
36 Yes, Elmer.

37
38 MR. SEETOT: As I said in the past, I
39 think bear harvest in and around Brevig Mission kind of
40 stopped during my teens. Like I said before in
41 meetings that we talk about them a lot, but we don't do
42 any action to decrease the population of bears in and
43 around Brevig. We do have two resident bears that we
44 have seen all summer within five miles of Brevig with
45 little or no participation in bear harvest. We just
46 talk about them. Let them go about their natural cycle
47 and then that's about it.

48
49 Our neighboring village, which is
50

1 Teller, I think they're more proactive in harvesting
2 bears. There have been a number of cabin break-ins in
3 and around Agiapuk River or in and around Toksook
4 Channel that have occurred during the past five years.

5
6 So it's a major problem of bears
7 breaking into cabins or where the women or people that
8 pick berries, pick plants have a concern that these
9 bears that are in the vicinity that they might be able
10 to destroy or take human lives. However, that is not
11 the case right now. They're just destroying cabins.
12 Not so much fish racks, but cabins that they do have a
13 tendency to break in.

14
15 So that's pretty much our problem. I
16 guess our mentality is that since we do not use bear as
17 a local resource for meat consumption, we just kind of
18 leave them alone. I guess the other way to decrease
19 the number of bears is through TEK, is argued forcibly
20 among user groups, so that the resource can go away.

21
22 That's pretty much what we have been
23 told in the past or like Tom was mentioning, increase
24 the bear harvest by two. That would kind of eliminate
25 the bear sightings that are seen in and around
26 communities.

27
28 We do have a bear problem in and around
29 our area, but we really haven't taken bears for harvest
30 or for meat consumption because that wasn't really
31 passed on to us other than just taking bear in defense
32 of life and property.

33
34 Thank you.

35
36 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
37 Elmer.

38
39 Leland.

40
41 MR. OYOUNICK: Yeah, the locals at home
42 reported a high number of bears in Unalakleet River and
43 along the coast toward St. Michael and Stebbins,
44 especially during the spring. Some of them have gotten
45 rid of bears because, like he says, when the ladies go
46 pick berries they don't want to be bothered especially
47 by bears.

48
49 I think this is a good idea.

50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.

2

3

Any other comments.

4

5

Brandon.

6

7

MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a couple questions and I think it's for the Department. I know for the 22B change in regulation for brown bear it's very new, but what I'm wondering, it's already in place, has the Department compiled information if the bear harvest is the same or if it has risen substantially. And I'll have another question after that.

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MS. HUGHES: Thanks. This is Letty with Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Through the Chair to Member Ahmasuk. So the two bear per regulatory year change was adopted in January of this year, so then that regulation took effect this fall.

With that I have like harvest out of 22B, but it's a little too early yet to see because harvest is still continuing. I don't have spring data to see just how that opportunity is being taken with residents of harvesting two bears per regulatory year. Hopefully come this spring I might have a better idea as to who within Unit 22 or even outside of Unit 22 was able to take that opportunity.

MR. AHMASUK: Mr. Chair. My next question. So other units that did go to two bears a year, like 22A, when that happened -- there should be enough information now to show if that -- so just as an example 22A it went two bears a year some time ago. Did that unit substantially increase in harvest after the regulation change?

MS. HUGHES: Through the Chair to Member Ahmasuk. That's a really good question. So all of 22A per resident has the two bear per regulatory year. I can talk about, when we talk about hunter demographics, the type of hunters who are harvesting bears. In Unit 22A, a lot of the bear harvest is coming from non-residents. There is some local participation from hunters from Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, Stebbins, but for the most part it's non-residents. They can only have one bear per regulatory year. There are some residents from the Unalakleet area who

1 have participated in that.

2

3

4 So looking at from 22A I can say there
5 are some. You know, it's not a large number. It's not
6 very high. How that will compare with Unit 22B, you
7 know, we have within Nome residents and residents that
8 live in the 22B area just a little bit more proactive
9 bear hunting, you know, that go out and look for bears.
10 So it will be interesting to see and to compare the 22A
11 area and the 22B area when we get a little bit more
12 data.

12

13

MR. AHMASUK: Thank you.

14

15

16

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
more discussion.

17

18

(No comments)

19

20

MR. GRAY: Question.

21

22

23

24

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: The question
has been called. All those in favor of the motion
signify by saying aye.

25

26

IN UNISON: Aye.

27

28

29

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
opposed same.

30

31

(No opposing votes)

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ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion to
adopt Wildlife Proposal 18-39 has been adopted. Moving
on we have Wildlife Proposal 18-40, Proposal WP18-40,
align State and Federal seasons and harvest limits for
brown bear in 22C.

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MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
This is Suzanne Worker. The analysis for WP18-40
begins on page 64 of your meeting materials. This
proposal was also submitted by this Council and it
requests that the Unit 22C brown bear harvest season be
extended from the current season, that's May 10th to
May 25th, to a longer season that runs from April 1st
to May 31st.

47

48

49

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Again, the rationale is that earlier
this year the Alaska Board of Game lengthened the

1 spring bear season to April 1st to May 31st in State
2 regulation, so changing it in Federal regulation would
3 reduce regulatory complexity and would ease user
4 confusion. The Council also believes that it would
5 provide Federally qualified subsistence users better
6 access to brown bears in early spring.

7
8 So again a current unit-wide population
9 estimate is not available for brown bears in Unit 22,
10 but overall observations indicate that the Unit 22 bear
11 population remains productive.

12
13 In Unit 22C, harvest has increased
14 notably as the regulations have been liberalized. So
15 between 1990 and 1997 the reported harvest averaged
16 eight bears annually. After liberalization annual
17 reported harvest doubled to an average of 16 bears
18 between 1998 and 2015.

19
20 In 2015, the first year after the
21 harvest limit was liberalized from one bear per four
22 years, reported harvest increased to 30 bears.
23 Approximately 58 percent of the reported brown bear
24 harvest in Unit 22C between 1998 and 2015 were males,
25 which again exceeds the harvest objective established
26 by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to maintain
27 the harvest of at least 50 percent males.

28
29 Adoption of this proposal is expected
30 to have a negligible effect on the Unit 22C brown bear
31 population primarily because there is so little Federal
32 public land in Unit 22C, but again it will result in
33 reduced regulatory complexity. So the OSM preliminary
34 conclusion is to support WP18-40.

35
36 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

37
38 I'll be happy to take questions.

39
40 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any questions
41 from the Council.

42
43 (No comments)

44
45 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
46 Reports on board consultation, tribe, ANCSA
47 corporation.

48
49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no reports from
2 the tribal consultation on Proposal 18-40. Thank you.

3
4 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
5 Karen. Agency comments. ADF&G, Federal, tribal.

6
7 (No comments)

8
9 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
10 Advisory group comments, other Regional Council, Fish
11 and Game Advisory Committee, Subsistence Resource
12 Commissions.

13
14 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 This is Suzanne Worker. No other Councils have taken
16 action on WP18-40. That's Regional Advisory Councils.

17
18 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.

19
20 Summary of written public comments.

21
22 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 This is Karen Deatherage. No written public comments
24 were received for Proposal No. 18-40.

25
26 Thank you.

27
28 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Public
29 testimony. Anybody on the phone or on the floor.

30
31 (No comments)

32
33 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
34 Regional Council recommendations. Motion to adopt.

35
36 MR. GRAY: So move.

37
38 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by Tom.

39
40 MR. AHMASUK: Second.

41
42 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
43 Austin -- I mean, excuse me, Brandon.

44
45 (Laughter)

46
47 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Discussion.

48
49 (No comments)

50

1 MR. GRAY: Question.

2

3 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Karen.

4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6 This would be a good time for the Council to provide
7 justification for why it would vote for or against this
8 proposal because we do need to have that on record.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Brandon.

13

14 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
15 helped write this proposal for the State to help change
16 this. Originally, on paper, they went from one every
17 four to one every year. Yes, we had a pretty
18 substantial increase, but the timing of spring change,
19 the variability of spring change, on paper that doesn't
20 address the spring change.

21

22 That was the outcry from the public
23 mostly here in Nome. People want to use their
24 snowmachines to go out and hunt brown bear, but if the
25 spring happens in April, then they're out of luck.
26 They couldn't use their snowmachines. If spring
27 happened to be in June again, then they missed out on
28 harvest opportunity.

29

30 So, myself, I will be supporting this
31 in that aspect but also to align the State and Federal
32 regulations.

33

34 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
35 Brandon. That's the same like our community trying to
36 get ready for a spring hunt. Because of earlier time
37 of spring breakup, it's the same came with the bear.
38 You know, we're losing our snow a lot earlier than
39 usual because of climate change.

40

41 Yes, Tom.

42

43 MR. GRAY: Yeah, I'm going to vote for
44 it also just to get rid of confusion, but if you go
45 look on Page 68, Sledge Island and a little bit of land
46 up past Sinuk by Woolley Lagoon is the only lands that
47 are going to be affected by this. It's so minute it's
48 kind of stupid, but at least it will get rid of the
49 confusion.

50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
2 Tom.

3
4 Leland.

5
6 MR. OYOUNICK: Yeah, there seem to be
7 bears coming closer and closer to town, so in the
8 interest of public safety I guess by decreasing their
9 population we could keep them away a little bit.

10
11 Thank you.

12
13 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
14 Leland. Any other justification. Yes, Elmer.

15
16 MR. SEETOT: Access to harvest of bears
17 in May would be limited in our area due to snow
18 conditions already melted. I think we've got to kind
19 of look at that. Seasons of spring are pretty much
20 different in different parts of the Seward Peninsula
21 Unit 22 area. The more ground you see in and around
22 the community the more I think it will melt.

23
24 Like I stated earlier, I just saw the
25 last of the Snow Geese last week. Five years ago it
26 was first or second week in September, so there's quite
27 a bit of a change in conditions from that time.

28
29 Also during the Iditarod Sled Dog Race
30 coverage last March they were showing pictures of no
31 snow conditions along the trail, so that's a big major
32 factor. Other things are manmade activity within the
33 Arctic. I think it's having a warming effect on the
34 low pressures that we have been receiving constantly
35 during the past six months. I think that increase or
36 decrease the temperature in the eastern portion of the
37 world.

38
39 It is going to have a major impact on
40 us. Whether it's cold air from the north or if it's
41 constantly wet and soggy throughout the summer, we have
42 seen temperatures last year where Alaska was a lot
43 warmer than the continental USA due to the polar or the
44 vortex or whatever they call that weather pattern. So
45 things are changing constantly.

46
47 When snow is away from our
48 transportation mode, then we have to use other sources
49 and that makes it harder for us to harvest animals

50

1 within that certain time period, so we just kind of
2 have to move on and consider harvesting other mammals
3 next on our list.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you. We
8 don't have any other justification comments.

9

10 We'll move to vote on the motion.

11

12 MR. SEETOT: Question.

13

14 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: The question
15 has been called. All those in favor of the motion
16 signify by saying aye.

17

18 IN UNISON: Aye.

19

20 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
21 opposed same.

22

23 (No opposing votes)

24

25 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion passed
26 WP18-40, align State and Federal seasons and harvest
27 limits for brown bears in Unit 22C. Next on the agenda
28 we have crossover proposals. Wildlife Proposal 18-31,
29 shorten caribou season in portion of Unit 18 and 18
30 remainder.

31

32 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33 This is Suzanne Worker again. So just a reminder the
34 crossover proposals are proposals from other regions
35 that have an action in places where Unit 22 subsistence
36 users have a customary and traditional use
37 determination, so areas where at least some of you are
38 eligible to hunt. So that entitles you to give a
39 recommendation to the Federal Subsistence Board.

40

41 Some of these proposals that we're
42 calling crossover proposals are actually proposals for
43 the northern caribou herds and they will affect the
44 regulations in Unit 22, a couple of them.

45

46 First we'll start with WP18-31, which
47 is a caribou proposal for Unit 18. This proposal
48 starts on Page 77 of your book. It was submitted by
49 the Orutsararmiut Native Council. They are concerned

50

1 about the conservation status of the Mulchatna Caribou
2 Herd, so they're requesting that the caribou season in
3 Unit 18 be shortened from August 1st to March 15th to
4 August 1st to February 28th. So reducing the season by
5 about 15 days.

6
7 Historically, the Mulchatna Caribou
8 Herd has ranged from a low of around 20,000 to a high
9 of around 200,000 animals. In recent years it's
10 fluctuated between 26,000 and 31,000 caribou. The
11 current population estimate, which was obtained in
12 2016, was around 27,000 caribou, so that's on the low
13 end of the historical average. It's also just below
14 the population objective of 30,000 to 80,000 animals.
15 In 2016 there were 39 bulls to 100 cows, which is the
16 highest bull/cow ratio that's been observed in this
17 population since 2000.

18
19 The reported harvest by Federally
20 qualified subsistence users has averaged fewer than 500
21 caribou annually since 2000. In recent years the
22 reported harvest by local users has been on the
23 decline, although unreported harvest almost certainly
24 exists. Almost 50 percent of the reported harvest
25 occurs in early spring in either February or March.
26 Among the Federally qualified subsistence users, nearly
27 50 percent of the reported harvest from the Mulchatna
28 Herd has occurred in Unit 18.

29
30 So my point in bringing that up is that
31 what happens in Unit 18 really probably does matter for
32 the Mulchatna Herd at this time of year.

33
34 If this proposal was adopted, the
35 Federal season will be shorter than the State season by
36 15 days, but since there's nothing preventing Federal
37 users from hunting under State regulation there's
38 expected to be no actual effect on the caribou
39 population or on subsistence users.

40
41 It seems the main effect of this
42 proposal would just be to increase regulatory
43 complexity, which is unnecessary in the absence of a
44 conservation benefit in our view. So the OSM
45 preliminary conclusion is to oppose WP18-31.

46
47 I'll be happy to take any questions
48 from the Council.

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
2 questions from the Council.

3
4 Yes, Tom.

5
6 MR. GRAY: The management goal is
7 30,000 to 80,000. We're at 27,000. This proposal is
8 put forth to try and help any more decrease in animals.
9 Has the State put an effort forth to stop that decrease
10 also?

11
12 I think about the Western Arctic
13 Caribou Herd and the steps that they're taking and
14 putting in place to minimize impacts by hunting on that
15 herd. It sounds like if we're below the management
16 goal of a few thousand animals, we need to start
17 thinking about -- or somebody needs to start thinking
18 about that resource. When you start talking 39 bulls
19 to so many cows, you would think that it could rebound
20 pretty fast with those numbers, but maybe the predators
21 are so much that it doesn't rebound very well.

22
23 One thing I didn't hear was a year
24 later what kind of recruitment are we getting?

25
26 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Gray.
27 Through the Chair. So you might have to remind me
28 about some of those comments that came at the tail end
29 there. I'll start at the beginning by saying that the
30 Councils that are in the range of the Mulchatna Caribou
31 Herd, the Bristol Bay Council and the Y-K Delta
32 Council, seem to place a high value on maintaining
33 parallel State and Federal regulations just because
34 it's a mess otherwise.

35
36 Another thing I didn't mention is that
37 under Federal regulation harvest of Mulchatna Caribou
38 occurs by State registration permit and that's an
39 effort to improve reporting. So it's also the reason
40 why having mismatched seasons is a little bit
41 complicated for local users.

42
43 As far as the regulatory history of the
44 Mulchatna Herd, there have been some efforts to
45 conserve the population and I might get the details
46 wrong, but several years ago in both Federal and State
47 regulation there was a proposal to change the harvest
48 restrictions, so throughout most of the range the
49 harvest limit is two caribou per year and their
50

1 actually -- hold on a sec. I'll look them up for you.
2 The current harvest restrictions are no more than one
3 of those caribou may be a bull and no more than one may
4 be taken between August 1st and January 31st.

5
6 That's for most of the range excluding
7 Unit 18. So that's in Units 9 and 17. So that was an
8 effort to protect both bulls and cows during times when
9 they were vulnerable. This year the Board of Game
10 rescinded that restriction, so the limit under State
11 regulation is now just two caribou. There's a proposal
12 under Federal regulation to do the same.

13
14 So there has been an effort to take
15 care of this herd a little bit, but with the
16 improvement in the bull/cow ratio, now there is an
17 effort to sort of loosen that up a little bit and make
18 it a little bit easier for users, especially
19 subsistence users to get out there when they can.

20
21 Just like with the northern herds,
22 which you guys are really familiar with, there's lots
23 of issues related to weather changes, river conditions
24 that aren't appropriate for travel, changing
25 distribution patterns, so things that people have been
26 able to rely on in the past. It's been more difficult.
27 So having less restrictive harvest regulations improves
28 the chance that local people can get out and harvest
29 caribou when they are nearby.

30
31 So I know I did not get the rest of
32 your questions, so remind me.

33
34 MR. GRAY: Recruitment. Is this herd
35 climbing, falling still, stable, what?

36
37 MS. WORKER: So this herd has been
38 bouncing around between 26,000 and 31,000 animals.
39 It's right at the bottom level of the population
40 objective, but the bull/cow ratio has been improving.
41 So it's kind of right on the edge.

42
43 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
44 more questions.

45
46 Elmer.

47
48 MR. SEETOT: So the proposal would cut
49 down 15 days of the harvest season, but that would be
50

1 inline with the State regs that are in effect right
2 now, is that correct?

3

4 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. Mr.
5 Seetot. It will remove 15 days from the Federal
6 season, so it will remove 15 days of harvest
7 opportunity on Federal land. In theory, however, it
8 will result in a misalignment with the State
9 regulations, so the State regulations currently include
10 those 15 days.

11

12 Also I want to clarify one thing and
13 that's the Federal regulations are applied only to
14 Federal public lands, but State hunting regulations
15 apply to both State and Federal lands unless there's a
16 Federal lands closure. There's not a Federal lands
17 closure for caribou in this case, so anybody can hunt
18 under State regulation on Federal land. Whether you're
19 hunting under State regulation or Federal regulation
20 you have to have a State registration permit.

21

22 So absolutely this proposal is an
23 effort to conserve caribou. The question is will it
24 have any actual effect because all Federally qualified
25 subsistence users can go get a State permit and they
26 can hunt on State land and they can hunt on Federal
27 land. The only difference that this proposal will make
28 is that the seasons won't be lined up anymore, so we
29 don't think that it will actually conserve any caribou
30 even though the intent is there.

31

32 MR. SEETOT: The main opposition was
33 because the dates didn't align with the State.

34

35 MS. WORKER: That's right. The dates
36 don't align with the State and we don't believe that it
37 will have any conservation effect. If it had a
38 conservation effect, our conclusion might be different.

39

40 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
41 more questions from the Council.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
46 Reports on board consultation, tribe, ANCSA
47 corporation.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no reports from
2 the tribal consultation on ANCSA corporations on this
3 Proposal 18-31.

4
5 Thank you.

6
7 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
8 Karen. Agency comments. ADF&G, Federal, tribal.

9
10 MR. DUNKER: Mr. Chair. This is Bill
11 Dunker with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game
12 again. I just wanted to give you the Department's
13 recommendation on this proposal. We're currently
14 opposed to the proposal in alignment with OSM's
15 recommendation again because it does not provide any
16 clear benefit to the population biology of the
17 Mulchatna Herd.

18
19 Again, we have concerns with the State
20 and Federal seasons being out of alignment with one
21 another and would recommend that we keep those seasons
22 in alignment for the simplicity of the users.

23
24 That's really all I have. Thank you.

25
26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
27 Advisory group comments, other Regional Council, Fish
28 and Game Advisory Committees, Subsistence Resource
29 Commissions.

30
31 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 This is Suzanne Worker. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
33 Regional Advisory Council, which is sort of the home
34 region for this proposal, supported WP18-31.

35
36 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
37 Summary of written public comments.

38
39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no written public
41 comments received for Proposal No. 18-31.

42
43 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
44 Public testimony. Anybody on the phone.

45
46 (No comments)

47
48 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
49 Regional Council recommendations. Motion to approve.

50

1 MR. KIRK: So move, Mr. Chair.

2

3 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by

4 Ronald Kirk.

5

6 MR. AHMASUK: Second.

7

8 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by

9 Brandon. Question. Discussion, justification.

10 Brandon.

11

12 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13 This isn't our region, but it kind of shares the same

14 concern just like we were discussing with the brown

15 bear regulations. I'd hate to see somebody get cited

16 for an area that's open but then they take five steps

17 over here and then it's closed. Just in that aspect

18 I'd be opposing this proposal.

19

20 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any

21 discussion, justification.

22

23 MR. GRAY: Question.

24

25 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: The question

26 has been called. All those in favor of the motion

27 signify by saying aye.

28

29 (No aye votes)

30

31 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those

32 opposed same.

33

34 IN UNISON: Aye.

35

36 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion to

37 adopt WP18-31, shorten caribou season in portion of

38 Unit 18 and 18 remainder failed.

39

40 Okay, I think we should go for a lunch

41 break. I'm not keeping track of my time and it's right

42 on 12:00 o'clock.

43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: What time should we

45 come back?

46

47 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Let's say

48 1:30.

49

50

1 MR. GRAY: I'll second that.

2

3 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay.

4 Everybody back at 1:30.

5

6 (Off record)

7

8 (On record)

9

10 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Good
11 afternoon. Hopefully everybody had a good lunch today
12 and hopefully they won't get sleepy like me. Call the
13 meeting back to order. Do we have any additions on the
14 phone? Anybody call in?

15

16 MS. DAMBERG: There's several people on
17 the phone. This is Carol Damberg in Anchorage regional
18 office.

19

20 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you for
21 attending via phone. Do we have anybody else?

22

23 MR. SHARP: This is Dan Sharp with
24 Bureau of Land Management in Anchorage.

25

26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you for
27 attending. Do we have anybody else on the phone?

28

29 MR. PERRY: Phillip Perry with Wildlife
30 Conservation. I'm down in Bethel.

31

32 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
33 Anybody else on the phone?

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
38 I'll welcome you back to our afternoon session. We'll
39 go on on the agenda to Wildlife Proposal 18-32, align
40 Federal season dates for caribou in Unit 21D, 22, 23,
41 24, 25A (West), 26A and 26B. Introduction and
42 presentation of analyst.

43

44 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 This is Suzanne Worker and I'll be presenting some more
46 wildlife proposals this afternoon. There's four
47 proposals that have to do with the northern caribou
48 herds. The first one of those is WP18-32. This
49 proposal begins on Page 92 of your book and it was

50

1 submitted by the Western Interior Alaska Subsistence
2 Regional Advisory Council.

3
4 The Western Interior Council requests
5 changing the season dates for caribou in all or parts
6 of Units 21D, 22, 23, 24, 25A and 26A and B. So
7 throughout the ranges of the Western Arctic Caribou
8 Herd, the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd and the Central Arctic
9 Caribou Herd they're requesting uniform bull and cow
10 seasons across the range. So the proposed season for
11 bulls would be July 1st to October 10th and February
12 1st through June 30th. The proposed season for cows
13 would be October 1st to February 1st.

14
15 Like I said, these changes are being
16 proposed throughout the ranges of these herds,
17 including the five hunt areas on the Seward Peninsula.
18 The proponents believe that these changes will prevent
19 deflection of the lead cows during the spring and fall
20 migration and that they will protect bulls during the
21 rut.

22
23 Something to keep in mind as you're
24 considering this proposal is the recent regulatory
25 changes that we've seen in the last few years. In
26 2015, the Alaska Board of Game shortened the seasons,
27 reduced the harvest limits and prohibited the take of
28 calves across the northern hunt areas in response to
29 the population decline in the Western Arctic Herds and
30 the Teshekpuk Herd.

31
32 In 2016, the Federal Subsistence Board
33 made similar changes and I'm sure you remember that we
34 spent a lot of time here making sure that local needs
35 were being met given the caribou movement patterns
36 across this expansive area. In 2017 for Unit 26B, the
37 Board of Game made additional changes in response to
38 the decline of the Central Arctic Herd. So there have
39 been quite a few changes in recent years.

40
41 All three of these herds have suffered
42 population declines in recent years. The Western
43 Arctic Herd declined from approximately 490,000 animals
44 in 2003 to 201,000 in 2016. The Teshekpuk declined
45 from approximately 69,000 in 2008 to 39,000 in 2014.
46 The Central Arctic Herd declined from approximately
47 70,000 animals in 2010 to just 22,000 in 2016.

48
49 It's important to note that caribou
50

1 migratory pathways often shift as the population grows
2 and shrinks and that disturbances such as hunting
3 activity and industrial development as well as habitat
4 suitability and climatic conditions also likely
5 influence caribou movement.

6
7 Having said that, it's been a long-held
8 cultural practice to allow the lead caribou to
9 establish these migratory pathways undisturbed. For
10 some time now local hunters have expressed concerns
11 over aircraft and non-local hunters disrupting caribou
12 migration. This has been the source of a lot of user
13 conflict.

14
15 As far as harvest goes, about 12,000
16 caribou are harvested annually from the Western Arctic
17 Caribou Herd. This is about equal to the estimated
18 harvestable surplus, which is calculated at 6 percent
19 of the population. Hunters who live within the range
20 of the Western Arctic Herd harvest 95 percent of the
21 total harvest and most of that harvest occurs in Unit
22 23.

23
24 For the other herds, about 3,000
25 caribou are harvested annually from the Teshekpuk Herd
26 and that is likely exceeding the estimated harvestable
27 surplus at this point. It's a similar story with the
28 Central Arctic Herd. The harvest is probably in excess
29 of the estimated harvestable surplus.

30
31 So there are several things to consider
32 with this proposal and one of the big ones is that this
33 is a one size fits all solution to a problem that we
34 spent a lot of time on last cycle. I'm sure you
35 remember. So for Unit 22 specifically it reduces the
36 flexibility that we built into the regulations to
37 account for the variable timing of caribou arrival and
38 departure.

39
40 It's also worth considering that State
41 and Federal caribou regulations throughout the range of
42 these northern herds changed in 2015 and 2016. It's
43 going to take some time before we fully understand
44 whether or not those changes have been effective. So
45 that's something to keep in mind, whether or not we
46 want to change them again.

47
48 I do want to acknowledge that this
49 proposal is in part an effort to conserve cow caribou
50

1 and that's an important component of regrowing these
2 herds, but unless the State regulations change in a
3 similar manner a reduction in cow harvest is unlikely
4 because Federally qualified subsistence users who take
5 the majority of caribou from these herds can still hunt
6 under State regulation.

7
8 There was an intent to submit this to
9 the Board of Game as an agenda change request. I don't
10 know if that's happened or not. If it doesn't happen
11 on the State side as well, changing the Federal
12 regulations might not make a lot of sense.

13
14 I also want to point out that the
15 concern about disruption of migratory patterns is a
16 complaint that's directed towards non-Federally
17 qualified users and changing the regulation in this way
18 doesn't address the hunting patterns of that group. So
19 again it seems to me like these changes might not make
20 a lot of sense unless there's a similar action on the
21 State side.

22
23 In general, these changes would result
24 in a loss of Federal subsistence opportunity, but they
25 likely wouldn't be accompanied with a conservation
26 effect primarily because of the way the State
27 regulation is written.

28
29 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
30 oppose Proposal WP18-32. That was a really brief
31 overview about the biological condition and the other
32 issues surrounding this, but I can try to take your
33 questions if you want to discuss it.

34
35 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

36
37 MR. GRAY: Sorry. I don't really have
38 a question as much as I have a comment. Two years ago
39 at the Western Arctic Caribou Herd meeting there was a
40 group of people from Kotzebue that put together a
41 proposal and there was several of us from Nome in that
42 meeting and we said leave Unit 22 alone. Don't make
43 any changes. They were putting a proposal together
44 going to the Board of Game.

45
46 That proposal went to the Board of Game
47 with Kotzebue's ideas in how our regulation should look
48 here in 22. It took a lot of work to get this changed
49 back to what we wanted. I looked at this proposal on
50

1 Page 92. You look at Unit 22 and they want to wipe out
2 our hunt dates and put their own hunt dates in here and
3 that was one of the hurdles or one of the problems that
4 we had was the Western Arctic Caribou Herd shows up to
5 us late in the season and if we abided by their rules,
6 the season would be closed until February or something.

7
8 It's not fair for our hunters and our
9 users down here to play the rules by let's say
10 Kotzebue's -- you know, the animals go by Kotzebue and
11 this fits Kotzebue's world, but it doesn't fit our
12 world. I'm going to vote against this proposal.

13
14 Mainly the other thing is these people
15 aren't taking into account the different areas and the
16 diversity of how the animals move through the areas and
17 who's using this resource and so on and so forth. I
18 think Unit 22, the way we have it set up right now, is
19 what we have asked for with both the State and the
20 Feds.

21
22 We don't need somebody else coming in
23 from the outside dictating to us how our regulation
24 should look and that's what this proposal is doing.
25 So, again, I'm going to vote against it.

26
27 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Does anybody
28 else have any questions for the analyst.

29
30 (No comments)

31
32 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
33 Reports on board consultation, tribe, ANCSA
34 corporation.

35
36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
37 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no reports from
38 the tribes or ANCSA corporations on this proposal.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
43 Karen. Agency comments. ADF&G, Federal, tribal.

44
45 MR. DUNKER: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.
46 This is Bill Dunker with the Department of Fish and
47 Game. I just wanted to provide you guys with the
48 Department's position on this particular proposal. We
49 are opposed to it as it stands right now. A lot of the
50

1 reasons that Suzanne mentioned in terms of kind of
2 these blanket changes across large geographical areas
3 without necessarily taking into consideration
4 individual herd dynamics, local harvest patterns, that
5 kind of thing. It doesn't seem like a good fit for
6 such a large geographical area.

7
8 As we've seen with some of these other
9 proposals also it would create inconsistencies between
10 the State and the Federal regulations and for the
11 benefit of the user we'd like to see those remain as
12 close as possible.

13
14 That's all I have.

15
16 Thank you.

17
18 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
19 Advisory group comments, other Regional Council, Fish
20 and Game Advisory Committees, Subsistence Resource
21 Commissions.

22
23 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
24 This is Suzanne Worker. The Western Interior Regional
25 Advisory Council, who is the proponent of this
26 proposal, opposed WP18-32. They believe that these
27 changes are premature and that it's prudent to take
28 some time to see how the recent regulatory changes have
29 influenced the population dynamics of these herds.

30
31 Thank you.

32
33 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. This is Louis.
34 Who was that last comment from and what was the vote?

35
36 Sorry.

37
38 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. That
39 comment was through the Western Interior Subsistence
40 Regional Advisory Council and they're opposed to the
41 proposal.

42
43 MR. GREEN: Thank you.

44
45 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any others.

46
47 (No comments)

48
49 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. Moving
50

1 on. Summary of written public comments.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 This is Karen Deatherage. No written public comments

5 were received for Wildlife Proposal No. 18-32.

6

7 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Regional

8 Council recommendation. Motion to adopt.

9

10 Tom.

11

12 MR. GRAY: You missed public testimony.

13

14 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I'm sorry.

15 I'll go back.

16

17 Public testimony.

18

19 Yes, Roy Ashenfelter.

20

21 MR. ASHENFELTER: Thank you, Mr.

22 Chairman. Members of the Seward Peninsula RAC. My

23 name is Roy Ashenfelter. I represent -- I came here

24 representing Kawerak, but I hadn't had a chance to talk

25 to Kawerak in terms of this proposal. So I'll be

26 speaking for myself on this particular proposal.

27

28 The intent was something about changing

29 the migration. That's what I heard earlier. Once the

30 caribou get to Unit 22 in the winter, they're no longer

31 migrating. They're here in the wintertime. So this

32 intent does not apply to -- migration does not apply to

33 Unit 22. They're here. Once they get here they stay

34 until they migrate north. So this doesn't apply to us

35 in terms of migration.

36

37 And then as was spoken to earlier, when

38 the first proposal came out two years ago, we worked

39 with Fish and Game to change it to the way we wanted to

40 because when the caribou were here some of our hunters

41 were turning into illegal hunters because they were

42 only permitted to shoot cows instead of bulls. So they

43 would go out and shoot caribou when they were in Unit

44 22 and the road was still open. We had hunters out

45 there and they would shoot caribou. If they saw it was

46 a bull, they would leave it because it was at that time

47 illegal to shoot a bull.

48

49 So we worked with Fish and Game to come

50

1 up with a plan that works for us and so far it's
2 worked. We're allowed to hunt the way we want to. We
3 do permits. Fish and Game catches -- you know, we
4 report what we get. So we had to do some compromises,
5 but they were reasonable compromises.

6
7 So I'm going to speak out against this
8 particular proposal because it doesn't apply to us.
9 This speaks to migration. It doesn't apply to us and
10 we've come up with a better plan. I believe that all
11 of us in Unit 22 get to benefit when the caribou get to
12 our region.

13
14 Thank you.

15
16 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
17 Roy. I can echo back on that. We do have resident
18 caribou that are here year round in Unit 22E and they
19 are even calving up there, so we do have caribou that
20 are not migrating and being resident caribou now.

21
22 Any other public testimony.

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
27 Regional Council recommendations. Motion to adopt.

28
29 MR. GRAY: Motion to oppose.

30
31 (Laughter)

32
33 MR. GRAY: Okay, I move to adopt.

34
35 MR. GREEN: You must use that friendly
36 motion there, Mr. Gray.

37
38 MR. AHMASUK: Second.

39
40 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
41 Brandon. Question.

42
43 MR. GREEN: I'll call for the question,
44 Mr. Chair.

45
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: No.

47
48 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Next we have
49 discussion, justification. Yes, Elmer.

50

1 MR. SEETOT: I would kind of go along
2 with Tom Gray on the opposition of the dates. But we
3 do have caribou on the north side of Brevig, about 10
4 miles north of Brevig in the hills that are in close
5 proximity to Serpentine Hot Springs area. I think they
6 follow the ridge, they follow the mountain tops. It's
7 a short distance for the caribou to travel there and
8 they do have a lot of feed on the western half of the
9 northern Seward Peninsula.

10
11 We went caribou hunting last spring and
12 the majority of the caribou were in and around the
13 northern portion of the Seward Peninsula. Even though
14 caribou are still around Serpentine Hot Springs, I
15 think that we're not able to harvest caribou in our
16 area until kind of late or when we do have snow
17 conditions or when them people in our area do go by
18 four-wheelers 10 to 15 miles north of Brevig Mission,
19 which the terrain is pretty bad for the four-wheelers.
20 So that's the earliest that we have seen caribou in the
21 northern portion.

22
23 The reindeer herder who used to be up
24 around Shishmaref mentioned that to us about 10 years
25 ago because he was very active in and around the areas
26 where the reindeer grazed. Also along the southern
27 portion of Seward Peninsula. So we do have a presence
28 of caribou in that area and that's pretty much a prime
29 time, the first of July, to be getting the bulls
30 because they do have a good high fat content and
31 they're still not in the rut season. So that's a
32 pretty good animal to kind of go after.

33
34 Trying to align the harvest dates
35 consistent with all these other units I think that, you
36 know, it's not kind of going to work out due to what
37 Tom was saying. The migration I think is late right
38 now from the north, so we're not able to see the
39 majority of caribou in central Seward Peninsula until
40 other than the ones that are presently up and around
41 the northern portion of Good Hope Bay.

42
43 So I would say that it would not be
44 good for the dates to be consistent in all other areas.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any other
49 discussion, justification.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3

4 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yeah, I,
5 myself, am going to oppose this proposal, you know.
6 It's going to affect us especially in 22E. It's going
7 to make a criminal out of me to be hunting caribou
8 because I'm looking at the timeframe. The last caribou
9 I got was just day before we traveled to AFN and which
10 would be in the closed part of this proposal.

11

12 So it's going to make a criminal out of
13 us subsistence users who want to have our opportunity
14 to get the caribou before the freeze-up when we are
15 going to be landlocked on the island where we can't get
16 out of the island. So we try and get that opportunity
17 to get our meat before maybe middle part of November
18 when we can cross the lagoon.

19

20 Right now it's getting later and later
21 when we can cross the lagoon. So with this proposal
22 it's going to make a criminal out of us subsistence
23 users who subsist on caribou. So I'm going to oppose
24 this proposal.

25

26 Do we have any more discussion,
27 justification.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
32 Are you ready for the question.

33

34 MR. SEETOT: Question.

35

36 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: The question
37 has been called. All in favor of the motion signify by
38 saying aye.

39

40 (No aye votes)

41

42 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
43 opposed.

44

45 IN UNISON: Aye.

46

47 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. The
48 motion failed to support Wildlife Proposal 18-32, align
49 Federal season dates for caribou in Unit 21D, 22, 23,
50 24, 25A (West), 26A and 26B. Moving on we have

1 Wildlife Proposal 18-45, decrease harvest limit for
2 caribou in Unit 23. Introduction and presentation of
3 analyst.

4
5 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
6 This is Suzanne Worker again. WP18-45 begins on Page
7 177 of your book. This proposal was submitted by the
8 Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council and they
9 request that the harvest limit in Unit 23 be reduced
10 from 5 caribou per day to 3 caribou per day. They
11 believe this change is necessary to conserve the
12 Western Arctic Caribou Herd.

13
14 Like I mentioned in the last proposal,
15 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd has declined from
16 approximately 490,000 animals in 2003 to about 201,000
17 in 2016. That rate of decline appears to be slowing.
18 It's averaged just 5 percent per year between 2015 and
19 2016, which is down from the 15 percent annual decline
20 between 2011 and 2013.

21
22 Again, about 12,000 caribou per year
23 are harvested from the Western Arctic Caribou Herd and
24 hunters who live within the range of the herd harvest
25 95 percent of those. Most of the harvest from this
26 herd occurs in Unit 23, so I'll give you a little bit
27 more detail about that since that's what this proposal
28 is about.

29
30 Fifty-eight percent of the total
31 harvest of the Western Arctic Caribou is harvested by
32 residents of Unit 23. Of the caribou that's taken by
33 hunters who do not live within the range of the herd,
34 so non-local hunters, 76 percent of that non-local
35 harvest occurs in Unit 23.

36
37 If this proposal is adopted, Federal
38 regulations for caribou in Unit 23 would be more
39 restrictive than State regulations, which will
40 eliminate the subsistence priority, will increase the
41 regulatory complexity and will likely not have a
42 conservation effect since all Alaska residents,
43 including Federal users, will still be able to harvest
44 five caribou per day in Unit 23 under State regulation.

45
46 In addition, these changes don't change
47 the total number of caribou that a Federally qualified
48 subsistence user can harvest. It just changes the
49 number that they can harvest in a single day. So it
50

1 potentially just makes hunting less efficient and more
2 expensive.

3
4 A final consideration is that the
5 harvest limit in Unit 23 was recently reduced from 15
6 caribou per day to five caribou per day. So just like
7 in the last proposal it might be good to give those
8 changes a little bit of time and see if they have been
9 effective in reducing the decline of the caribou herd.

10
11 So the OSM preliminary conclusion is to
12 oppose WP18-45.

13
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15
16 I'm happy to take questions from the
17 Council.

18
19 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
20 questions from the Council.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
25 Reports on board consultation, tribe, ANCSA
26 corporation.

27
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no reports on
30 board consultations from the tribes or ANCSA
31 corporations on WP18-45.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
36 Karen. Agency comments. ADF&G, Federal, tribal.

37
38 MR. DUNKER: Mr. Chair. Bill Dunker
39 from Fish and Game again. I just thought I would add
40 some recent biological information pertaining to the
41 Western Arctic Herd for you guys to consider.

42
43 Generally speaking, in the last couple
44 years we've seen some pretty positive indicators from
45 the herd. Those have continued currently. Calf
46 survival, adult female survival, those have all been
47 showing encouraging signs for the productivity and the
48 overall status of the herd.

49
50

1 Biologists up in Kotzebue just
2 completed some composition surveys within the range of
3 the Western Arctic Herd. The results of that are
4 pending, but they seem to continue to indicate a
5 positive trend within the population.

6
7 Also the Department did complete a
8 photo census this past July. We're still waiting to
9 get the results from that survey, but we anticipate
10 them to be available in time for the working group
11 meeting in December.

12
13 The Department has kind of mirrored
14 some of the comments that OSM has provided here and the
15 biological impact of this proposal is unclear. At the
16 end of the day it very well may just result in less
17 efficient hunting practices and things like that.

18
19 That's all I have.

20
21 Thank you.

22
23 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you. Do
24 I have any questions from the Council.

25
26 (No comments)

27
28 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
29 Advisory group comments, other Regional Council, Fish
30 and Game Advisory Committees, Subsistence Resource
31 Commissions.

32
33 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 This is Suzanne Worker. The Western Interior Regional
35 Advisory Council took no action on WP18-45, preferring
36 to defer to the home region.

37
38 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
39 Summary of written public comments.

40
41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 This is Karen Deatherage. We received no written
43 public comments for Wildlife Proposal No. 18-32.

44
45 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
46 Karen. Public testimony.

47
48 (No comments)

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Anybody on the
2 phone.

3
4 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman. This is
5 Louis.

6
7 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

8
9 MR. GREEN: I thin it would be
10 appropriate, my way of feeling, is that we just didn't
11 take any action on it also. It's not in our unit.
12 That's just my thoughts. Thanks.

13
14 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
15 Louis. For the record, we'll have Louis down via
16 teleconference.

17
18 MR. GREEN: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, I was
19 on the vote we just took. Thank you.

20
21 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes.

22
23 MR. OYOUNICK: We're not part of their
24 group, but we are part of Alaska, so I think we should
25 help those folks too.

26
27 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay.
28 Currently we don't have a motion for discussion, so I'd
29 like to have a motion to adopt.

30
31 MR. GREEN: So moved, Mr. Chairman.
32 This is Louis. For discussion.

33
34 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by
35 Louis.

36
37 MR. KIRK: Second.

38
39 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
40 Ronald. Question, discussion, justification.

41
42 MR. GRAY: I have a question, I guess.
43 If we take no action, we're sending some kind of a
44 message that we're deferring it to Unit 23 or whatever,
45 but if we do take action, take a vote on it, it seems
46 like it would send a stronger message to folks that,
47 hey, we're definitely not agreeing with what you
48 propose here and go back and do your homework so to
49 speak. Anyway, my thought.

50

1 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. Louis.

2

3 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

4

5 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
6 took a stand on the fact that the nonrural users -- we
7 took that stand in the past as far as the migration and
8 conservation along with them and I think Western
9 Interior went along with it also.

10

11 This one is kind of -- I'm wavering on
12 this one. I'm not sure how to tackle it either. Tommy
13 makes a good point. So does -- I think it was Ron. We
14 didn't help them before because it does make a
15 difference for us I think because we're off the same
16 herd. This is to them a conservation proposal on their
17 turf. I just want to hear other comments from Council.

18

19 Thanks.

20

21 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yeah, this is
22 Fred. I kind of have mixed feelings on this one here.
23 They are from a different region, but yet too they are
24 the same animals that we subsist on. They migrate,
25 they move around. Even though they're from a different
26 region, they're still the same animals that we subsist
27 on. So I have kind of a mixed feeling on this one
28 here.

29

30 Yes, Tom.

31

32 MR. GRAY: I go back to two years ago
33 and the struggles we had with other people creating
34 rules and regulations through the Board of Game that
35 impacted us. Then I look at this proposal and in a
36 sense we're trying to adopt measures or somebody is
37 trying to adopt measures that would limit Unit 23 to
38 three animals instead of five animals a day.

39

40 The way I look at this harvestable
41 surplus, there's no difference from Kotzebue people or
42 Deering people and our people. We're the same. We
43 should have the same harvest measures. I'll guarantee
44 you if we vote in favor of this and the Board
45 eventually adopts it and shoves it down everybody's
46 throats, we're next in line.

47

48 So we have to work together. Again, I
49 think what's good for Kotzebue is good for us. What's

50

1 good for us is good for Kotzebue. So I'm against this
2 proposal. If it was let's change the limits for the
3 areas the Western Arctic Caribou Herd migrates into and
4 Unit 22 and Unit 23 have the same numbers, then I'd say
5 let's discuss it. Let's get all the evidence, the
6 picture count and the growth rates and stuff like that
7 and talk about it, but that's not what's happening
8 here.

9
10 We're Unit 22, 23, 26. We're all
11 pitting against each other against 23 and I'll
12 guarantee you it's not going to be a smiley thing in
13 the end. So, again, I'm going to vote against it.

14
15 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Brandon.

16
17 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
18 we heard from the Department that the caribou
19 population is in the positive trend. The regions
20 throughout the caribou herd have already had
21 restrictions, regulation change. I think it would be
22 better for now if we just kind of let the current rules
23 and regulations take place a little bit longer to see
24 how that pans out.

25
26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you. If
27 there is no further discussion, justification --
28 anybody else?

29
30 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. This is Louis
31 again.

32
33 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Go ahead.

34
35 Yes, Louis.

36
37 MR. GREEN: Just a thought here. Now
38 these folks are asking to have their daily harvest cut
39 back. Does that help 22? Does that not help 22?
40 Tommy, I wanted to hear your opinion on it.

41
42 MR. GRAY: To be honest I don't think
43 it helps us because of the size of the herd. I
44 struggle with making rules for one set of people and
45 that same herd goes into another area. You know, we
46 live by the same guidelines and we have different
47 rules.

48
49 Animal-wise, to be honest, when there's
50

1 100,000 caribou, we all have the same chance. You know
2 as well as I do that when these caribou actually get
3 into our areas there's lots of caribou. I don't think
4 changing the numbers is going to affect how many
5 animals actually reach us.

6
7 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thanks, Tommy. I
8 guess I would ask Mr. Dunker, through the Chair, what
9 is the population at this time?

10
11 MR. DUNKER: Through the Chair. The
12 last abundance estimate that we have for the Western
13 Arctic Herd is from a photo census that was completed
14 in late June/early July of 2016. At that point I
15 believe it was just over 200,000.

16
17 MR. GREEN: Okay. So that's the same
18 one. I wasn't sure if there was another one done. I
19 didn't catch that. Okay, thanks, Bill.

20
21 Mr. Chair, I think that's all I have.

22
23 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: If I'm
24 correct, in State regulations we're allowed five
25 caribou per day with a limit of 20 per year, whereas in
26 the Federal regulations it's five per day per hunter.

27
28 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. That
29 is correct in Unit 22, but in Unit 23 where this
30 proposal would take place, the limit is five per day
31 with no annual limit in both Federal and State
32 regulation.

33
34 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

35
36 MR. GRAY: Correct me if I'm wrong,
37 Bill. I thought Kotzebue Unit 23 went to this 20
38 animals per person and they're on the same ticket that
39 we're on down here. Isn't that true?

40
41 MR. DUNKER: They did adopt a
42 registration permit, but they did not adopt an annual
43 bag limit in the same way that we did down here in Unit
44 22. So they're on a registration permit. It's RC-907.
45 They retained the bull closure that we had in effect
46 years ago down here in Unit 22 and it's still five
47 caribou per day with no annual bag limit.

48
49 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
50

1 other discussion, justification.

2

3 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair.

4

5 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Ronald.

6

7 MR. KIRK: I oppose this proposal that
8 is being brought up before us because I don't think
9 they're taking into consideration the climate change.
10 If we do agree with this to cut their caribou down to
11 three and later on in the future whereas the climate
12 change affects our subsistence way of life and theirs,
13 it's going to hurt them in the long run. So I don't
14 approve of this proposal that's before us.

15

16 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17

18 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

19

20 MR. GRAY: There's another side to this
21 whole process that you guys aren't seeing and that's
22 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group. They're
23 very aggressive in managing this resource that we're
24 talking about here. The Federal side of this is
25 usually a year behind. If there's issues and problems,
26 it will show up in December of this and action will be
27 taken and we'll be dealing with it a year later. So
28 there's another group that is very aggressive.

29

30 Right now myself and Charlie Lean, I
31 think -- are you on there Clarence Saccheus, on that
32 Western Arctic Board? There's a bunch of us from this
33 region that sit on that board. But when it comes to
34 issues like this, this is a Federal proposal so to
35 speak. Somebody is pushing to get the Native hunt.
36 There's 12,000 animals getting killed every year off
37 this hard.

38

39 Somebody is pushing to get this number
40 down. Now if that number gets shoved down and instead
41 of 12,000 animals they can shoot 9,000 animals, all of
42 a sudden the hunting and the transporters and everybody
43 is going to jump on this and say you've got all these
44 extra animals out there.

45

46 So we need to think beyond this, I
47 guess. Again, there's another group of people that's
48 going to be looking at this proposal and they're going
49 to scream and holler. Believe me it's going to be an

50

1 issue. I'm sure Bill will be there in December. What
2 I'm trying to point out is there's other people and
3 other boards that are dealing with this same herd and
4 same numbers.

5
6 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. Louis.

7
8 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

9
10 MR. GREEN: Thank you. Tommy, you made
11 a good point about this Western Arctic Caribou Herd
12 Working Group. I understand this group exists, but
13 I've never seen any information from them to this
14 group. It may be going to like say Northern Norton
15 Sound or Southern Norton Sound Advisory Committees for
16 Fish and Game, but without any information to this
17 group we don't know where they're at. I actually asked
18 Charlie about it before.

19
20 If there's a working group, it would be
21 good to have that information across the board and
22 everybody would be on the same page. There's too many
23 inconsistencies here because we're not working
24 together. That's just my opinion, so I'm just sharing
25 that. If there is a way to get this spread across the
26 board for everybody to be on the same I'm for all that.

27
28 Thank you.

29
30 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. Do we
31 have any further discussion, justification.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none,
36 proceed to vote on the motion. Yes, Louis.

37
38 MR. GREEN: I was just saying I'd call
39 for the question. Sorry I cut you off.

40
41 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. All in
42 favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

43
44 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Aye.

45
46 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
47 opposed.

48
49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I believe
2 Wildlife Proposal WP18-45, decrease harvest and limit
3 for caribou in Unit 23, failed.

4
5 Next we have Wildlife Proposal 18-
6 48/49, acquired registration permit for caribou in Unit
7 22, 23 and 26A. Can we please have introduction and
8 presentation of analyst.

9
10 I'm sorry. I take that back. We'll go
11 back to Wildlife Proposal 18-46/47, close caribou
12 harvest to non-Federally qualified users in Unit 23.

13
14 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
15 thought I was going to have to think on my feet there
16 for a minute.

17
18 (Laughter)

19
20 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: We must be
21 almost ready for a break.

22
23 MS. WORKER: Okay. This is the
24 analysis for WP18-46/47 which starts on Page 215. This
25 is another Unit 23 caribou proposal. WP18-46 was
26 submitted by the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working
27 Group and it requests that Federal public lands in Unit
28 23 be closed to caribou hunting except by Federally
29 qualified subsistence users.

30
31 WP18-47 was submitted by Enoch Mitchell
32 of Noatak. He also requests that Federal public lands
33 in Unit 23 be closed to the harvest of caribou except
34 by Federally qualified subsistence users, but only
35 through regulatory 2019 to 2020. So that's one
36 regulatory cycle he's requesting this closure.

37
38 The proponents of these proposals are
39 concerned about the population status of the Western
40 Arctic Caribou Herd and they believe that closing
41 Federal lands will promote conservation of the herd and
42 that it will also reduce user conflicts and improve the
43 ability of subsistence users to harvest caribou and to
44 meet their subsistence needs.

45
46 So just a little bit of history about
47 where we've been in the recent past with this closure.
48 In 2016, the Board adopted Wildlife Special Action 16-
49 01 closing all Federal public lands in Unit 23 to the

50

1 harvest of caribou by non-Federally qualified users.
2 That was for the 2016-17 regulatory year.
3

4 In 2017, the Board adopted Wildlife
5 Special Action 17-03, which closed some Federal public
6 lands in Unit 23 to caribou hunting by non-Federally
7 qualified users for the 2017-18 regulatory year. This
8 targeted closure included Federal public lands along
9 the Noatak River and within the Squirrel, Eli and Aggie
10 River drainages.
11

12 The Board felt that the closure in the
13 specified area was warranted in order to continue
14 subsistence use and they considered this targeted
15 closure to be a reasonable compromise for all users.
16

17 It's clear that there's two parts of
18 this issue. The first part is the decline of the
19 Western Arctic Caribou Herd and the other part is this
20 issue of user conflict in Unit 23. So conflicts
21 between local and non-local hunters have been well
22 documented in Unit 23 since at least the 1980s,
23 particularly in Noatak National Preserve and the
24 Squirrel River drainage.
25

26 Local hunters have expressed concern
27 about the use of aircraft and about disruption of
28 caribou migration by non-locals who scare caribou away
29 from river crossings, land aircraft and camp along
30 migration routes and who shoot the lead caribou. There
31 are indications that while aircraft can affect caribou
32 behavior in the short term, they likely do not impact
33 long-term caribou behavior or migration through Noatak
34 National Preserve. Short-term disturbance could still
35 affect hunter success.
36

37 There have been several efforts to
38 address and mitigate these user conflicts in Unit 23.
39 They include the Noatak Controlled Use Area, the
40 Delayed Entry Zone, which is in the western portion of
41 Noatak National Preserve, and the formation of the Unit
42 23 working group.
43

44 In addition to that Unit 23 working
45 group, the Board also established this Unit 23
46 interagency group in January of 2017. This is a group
47 of State and Federal representatives that gather and
48 discuss possible solutions to the Unit 23 user
49 conflicts. This group met in April 2017 and agreed
50

1 upon a possible targeted closure.

2

3

4 As I mentioned earlier, hunters who
5 live within the range of the Western Arctic Caribou
6 Herd harvest 95 percent of the total harvest from this
7 herd and most of that harvest occurs in Unit 23.
8 That's whether we're talking about local harvest or
9 whether we're talking about non-local harvest. Non-
10 local hunting declined markedly during the 2016 Federal
11 lands closure from an average of 487 hunters through
12 2014 to just 149 hunters in 2016.

13

14 If this proposal is adopted as written,
15 all Federal public lands in Unit 23 will be closed to
16 caribou hunting by non-Federally qualified users. This
17 isn't expected to have any biological impact since the
18 non-Federally qualified users account for such a small
19 percentage of the harvest from this herd at least
20 relative to the total harvest.

21

22 It's likely that it would reduce the
23 number of non-Federally qualified users and aircraft in
24 Unit 23, but it may also have the unintended effect of
25 concentrating use on State lands, particularly the
26 lands that are on gravel bars below the mean high water
27 mark and that could actually increase conflict in the
28 area.

29

30 Subsistence opportunity for Federally
31 qualified subsistence users may increase if this
32 proposal is adopted. Local residents, particularly
33 from the community of Noatak, recognize that the 2016-
34 2017 closure had a positive effect in terms of harvest
35 success.

36

37 There are just a couple of other things
38 I want to note. The first is that WACH Working Group
39 has developed guidelines for management of this herd
40 and there's a table on Page 236 if you care to look at
41 it.

42

43 Currently the population is right on
44 the line between preservative and conservative
45 management. One recommendation under preservative
46 management is closure of some Federal public lands to
47 non-qualified users.

48

49 The second thing is just a reminder
50 that there are two criteria for restricting non-

1 subsistence use under Title VIII of ANILCA. The first
2 is conservation of healthy wildlife populations and the
3 second is continuation of subsistence uses.

4
5 We don't believe that closure for
6 conservation reasons is warranted simply because the
7 number of caribou harvested by non-federally qualified
8 users is small relative to the total harvest. However,
9 we do believe that closure of some Federal lands for
10 the continuation of subsistence uses is warranted due
11 to continued user conflicts in the Noatak and Squirrel
12 River Drainages as well as the benefit that the Noatak
13 residents note as during the 2016-2017 closure.

14
15 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
16 take no action on Proposal WP18-47 and to support
17 Proposal WP18-46 with modification to close some but
18 not all Federal public lands in Unit 23 to caribou
19 hunting except by Federally qualified subsistence
20 users.

21
22 On Page 263 of your materials there's a
23 map. The hatched area on the map shows OSM's
24 modification. So the hatched area are the areas that
25 we propose to close and I'll describe them. Within a
26 10 mile wide corridor, so 5 miles on either side of the
27 Noatak River, from the western boundary of Noatak
28 National Preserve upstream to the confluence with the
29 Cutler River; north of the Noatak River between, and
30 including, the Kelly and Nimiuktuk River drainages;
31 within the northern and southern boundaries of the Eli
32 and Aggie River drainages, respectively; and within the
33 Squirrel River drainage.

34
35 So this modification goes beyond the
36 closure that is in place for the current regulatory
37 year, but it stops short of closing all Federal public
38 lands as requested by the proponents.
39 Again, the OSM conclusion is to support WP18-46 with
40 modification.

41
42 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43
44 I am happy to take questions on this
45 one if there are any.

46
47 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
48 questions from the Council.

49
50

1 Yes, Brandon.

2

3 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 Just so I have it clear in my head, you're proposing to
5 expand it from the controlled use area along the river,
6 that narrow corridor on Page 229, to the bigger area on
7 263, correct?

8

9 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Ahmasuk.
10 Through the Chair. So the Noatak Controlled Use Area
11 isn't a Federal lands closure. It just restricts
12 access with aircraft during like a month or 45 days.
13 The proposed closure includes much of the same area as
14 the Noatak Controlled Use Area, but it goes beyond
15 that.

16

17 So the part that is currently closed in
18 the current regulatory year is similar to the land
19 that's shown on Page 263, but it excludes the area
20 that's north of the Noatak River. So all that area
21 between the Kelly River drainage and the Nimiuktuk is
22 currently open, but OSM's conclusion is to expand that
23 closure a little bit.

24

25 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Brandon.

26

27 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
28 I'm not sure who this question would be to, which
29 agency. I have brought this up in the past. I'm fully
30 understanding their concern. Their subsistence users
31 are getting less opportunity to harvest or conflict
32 between user groups and whatnot. I understand that.
33 But the concern I brought up in the past was so they're
34 pushing out these non-Federally qualified subsistence
35 users. Where are those users going? Are they coming
36 here, are they going up north further, the North Slope
37 area?

38

39 Where I'm going with this is, you know,
40 our region took a hit. This is a hit that we as a
41 region agreed upon. I wouldn't want to necessarily
42 approve something that is going to push those
43 non-Federally qualified subsistence users to our area
44 and make it even harder on us.

45

46 MS. WORKER: Thank you for the
47 question. Through the Chair. I think that's a good
48 point. Certainly those guides and transporters have
49 something to gain from retaining their clients and

50

1 taking them somewhere else. They can take them to
2 State lands within Unit 23. I think there was a little
3 bit of an increase in Unit 26. A little bit of
4 increase in use by guides and transporters if I
5 remember correctly.

6
7 I'm not sure if there's been any into
8 Unit 22, but I think that's a valid concern and I think
9 that's an argument for considering a targeted closure
10 rather than a total Federal lands closure in Unit 23
11 because the areas that are included in the OSM
12 modification are the areas that were agreed upon by
13 Federal and State managers that have seen the most user
14 conflict.

15
16 So they're not randomly selected. These
17 are the areas where the conflict is occurring where
18 Federal subsistence users like to hunt and where non-
19 locals like to hunt.

20
21 So by doing a targeted closure it
22 leaves a lot of Federal land available for those guides
23 and transporters and non-locals that hopefully are a
24 little bit out of the way of the subsistence users, you
25 know, hunt areas.

26
27 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. Louis.

28
29 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

30
31 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
32 what it sounds to me like is that there's been a co-
33 management between the Feds and the State. There's an
34 agreement on this area, so to me that sounds like a
35 positive measure. It's been worked out by both
36 departments. I don't think there's any problem if we
37 did back it unless somebody else can say something that
38 would change my mind.

39
40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41
42 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Louis, this is
43 Fred. You know, it could have an effect on this in
44 Unit 22E because we do have a lot of Federal lands.
45 Instead of going over by Noatak area they may be moving
46 over to our backyard here, so that could have a
47 rippling effect on us in 22E within the National Park
48 Service Preserve. So might take that into
49 consideration.

50

1 Currently I don't see anybody landing
2 in a Park. You know, we're berry picking, we're always
3 out in the country, so I see very little of it, but who
4 knows what goes on in other areas of the Preserve.

5
6 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair.

7
8 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

9
10 MR. GREEN: So I guess, through the
11 Chair, asking the Department. Are there any numbers
12 that show that there has been movement of transporters
13 and guides into 22 because Federal lands are closed in
14 23?

15
16 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. I'm
17 not aware of that. I think the analysis addresses a
18 shift into Unit 26, but I don't recall that there was
19 any movement into 22. Bill might have a little bit
20 more to say about that.

21
22 MR. GREEN: Thanks for that. What do
23 you have, Mr. Dunker?

24
25 MR. DUNKER: Mr. Chair. Member Green.
26 I don't have any of the specific numbers or anything
27 like that associated with the number of non-residents
28 hunting in Unit 22 for caribou. The one thing I will
29 point out is that the non-resident season for caribou
30 in Unit 22 in the areas that we're talking about,
31 primarily Unit 22E, is an August 1st to September 30th
32 season. As most of you are aware, the bulk of the
33 Western Arctic Herd is not present in Unit 22 during
34 that time period.

35
36 Speaking just from my personal
37 observations from working in the Nome area office I
38 can't say that I've noticed an increase in the total
39 number of non-resident hunters that are pursuing
40 caribou in that area, but again I don't have any hard
41 numbers from harvest tickets and things like that for
42 any displacement of hunters or anything like that.

43
44 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thank you for your
45 comments there. It sounds like, Mr. Chair, this
46 proposal is backed by the combination of the State and
47 the Feds.

48
49 Thank you.
50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
2 Louis.

3
4 Elmer.

5
6 MR. SEETOT: I'm a member of the
7 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group and we had a
8 meeting in December. My recollection for Wildlife
9 Proposal 18-46/47 was that Mr. Mitchell was concerned
10 that the migratory patterns of the caribou were being
11 altered due to camps on the north side of the Noatak
12 River. When you alter the migration pattern, either
13 they go through Deering and then go on the northern
14 side of the Seward Peninsula in around Cape Espenberg
15 area or if you move them further east from their
16 regular migratory path, then they're coming through
17 Bendeleben Mountains.

18
19 That's what I have noticed over the
20 years that it all depends on where and how the caribou
21 were intercepted on their migratory path from the
22 Brooks Range area and that's my understanding of that
23 meeting at the Western Arctic Caribou Group, that the
24 migratory patterns were being altered by hunters when
25 they first went out to get the caribou when it first
26 opened. That's what I kind of recollect was that due to
27 that they are trying to close the Noatak River for that
28 area due to migratory patterns being altered by hunters
29 on the north side.

30
31 And then with 18-47 I'm not really too
32 sure. I wasn't really clear on that, but 18-46 it was
33 the way the caribou were being -- the migration was
34 being altered by hunters on the north side.

35
36 Thank you.

37
38 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
39 Elmer.

40
41 Yes, Brandon.

42
43 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
44 need clarification. I heard some what I think is
45 confusing terminology. You said that non-resident
46 pushed to here. You weren't sure of. But my question
47 earlier was they're wanting to limit the non-Federally
48 qualified subsistence users. So to me that also
49 includes Anchorage residents. They're non-Federally

50

1 qualified subsistence users. Are they offsetting
2 what's going on here? Because it's my understanding
3 that they do go to the Kotzebue area to hunt caribou,
4 but are they coming here offsetting us?

5
6 MR. DUNKER: Through the Chair. I
7 don't have that information from our harvest ticket
8 data to either confirm or deny that may or may not be
9 happening. Again, when we do -- speaking just from
10 personal experience and fielding phone calls from
11 hunters and things like that, most folks that contact
12 myself or other biologists at the office we're pretty
13 clear that the bulk of the animals are not present on
14 the Seward Peninsula during the kind of fall migratory
15 time period.

16
17 Honestly, again speaking from personal
18 experience, I don't believe there's been any kind of
19 dramatic increase in number of non-local or non-
20 resident hunters coming to the Seward Peninsula.

21
22 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. I just
23 might add something onto that. This closure was really
24 effective in eliminating a lot of non-Federally
25 qualified subsistence users. In 2016 there was only
26 about 150 hunters who were non-Federally qualified
27 subsistence users in Unit 23 and that was down from an
28 average of close to 500 prior to that.

29
30 So even if there's some dispersal of
31 those users into neighboring units it might not be very
32 dramatic. It might, but just something to keep in
33 mind.

34
35 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

36
37 MR. GRAY: Okay. I looked on this 263
38 page. There's a map on 263. Then I go back to this
39 original proposal, request Federal public lands in 23
40 be closed to caribou hunting except for Federally
41 qualified subsistence users. Basically 46 and 47 are
42 saying the same thing. So I go to this 263 and I look
43 at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park, BLM,
44 those are Federal lands that we're talking about,
45 right?

46
47 Okay. And then I look at the State
48 administered lands which are green. Everything else is
49 going to be shut down if this proposal is adopted to
50

1 non-Federally qualified people, is that correct?

2

3 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Gray.
4 Through the Chair. So I just want to make sure I
5 understand your question correctly. The hatched area
6 is the area that's proposed for closure. So all of
7 that other Federal land and all the State administered
8 lands will remain open to non-Federally qualified
9 users.

10

11 MR. GRAY: But read the proposal. It
12 says request that Federal lands in Unit 23 be closed to
13 caribou hunting except by Federally qualified
14 subsistence users. That's what the proposal says. Now
15 if there's something else that designates this area, it
16 seems like it should be in this outline.

17

18 MS. WORKER: Thank you. So the
19 proposal requests that all Federal public lands within
20 Unit 23 be closed. This map on Page 263, which you
21 might notice is missing part of its caption, this is
22 the suggested targeted closure. So this is the OSM
23 modification.

24

25 So OSM is suggesting that we don't shut
26 down all Federal public lands in Unit 23, but that we
27 take a close look at the lands that are creating the
28 most conflict and we shut those down and we leave the
29 lands that are less contentious open to non-Federally
30 qualified users and that's what the map on Page 263 is
31 reflecting.

32

33 MR. GRAY: Okay. I'm trying to get to
34 the root of the deal here. In order to adopt 263 we'd
35 have to have an amendment to the original proposal to
36 do what you're talking about here.

37

38 MS. WORKER: That is correct.

39

40 MR. GRAY: I like it in black and white
41 and ABC because I get confused.

42

43 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes.

44

45 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
46 Carl Johnson, OSM. Through the Chair. Your opening
47 motion can be whatever you want it to be. You do not
48 have to move to adopt the proposal as written. Your
49 opening motion could be if you're interested move to

50

1 adopt the proposal as modified by OSM. That would be
2 cleaner procedurally and that way you don't have to
3 have a motion and then amendments and discussions on
4 the amendments and then back to the original motion.
5 Your opening motion can be whatever you like.

6
7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
10 further questions for the analyst.

11
12 (No comments)

13
14 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
15 Reports on board consultation, tribe, ANCSA
16 corporation.

17
18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19 This is Karen Deatherage. We did not receive any
20 reports from tribes or ANCSA corporations on this
21 Proposal 18-46 or 47.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
26 Agency comments. ADF&G, Federal, tribal.

27
28 MR. DUNKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 Bill Dunker with Fish and Game again. The Department's
30 recommendation that I've got, as I understand it, is
31 for the proposals as they were written and not
32 necessarily including the amendment. The Department
33 recommendation for the proposals as written would be to
34 oppose the proposal because it will not improve the
35 caribou herd's population status and it is not needed
36 to provide subsistence hunting opportunity.

37
38 Recent actions by the Board of Game
39 requiring caribou registration permits for all resident
40 hunters in Unit 22, 23 and 26A were taken based on an
41 extensive public process that included the Regional
42 Advisory Councils, the Western Arctic Herd Working
43 Group, Fish and Game Advisory Committees and the Board
44 of Game. Additional restrictions are not needed at this
45 time.

46
47 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
48 Advisory group comments, other Regional Council, Fish
49 and Game Advisory Committees, Subsistence Resource

50

1 Commissions.

2

3

4 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
5 This is Suzanne Worker. The Western Interior Regional
6 Advisory Council supported the OSM modification on
7 WP18-46/47, agreeing that a targeted closure was the
8 most appropriate.

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1 this area. I'm just pointing out some certain things
2 that I think are confusing and will remain confused.

3
4 You are trying to solve a problem with
5 conflict users by assuming that we, because we're
6 Federal hunters, don't shoot the lead animals and the
7 non-Federally guys do and that you're really not saving
8 any animals. You're just displacing hunters from an
9 area to another area. So this is not in my way of
10 thinking solving problems. You don't lay out all the
11 groundwork for how to solve it.

12
13 I'm hoping that these people in Unit 23
14 -- you know, we had this proposal I think back in
15 February or March, some kind of teleconference, I
16 believe. We had it at the hotel here. To a person we
17 all opposed this. I didn't hear one Federal
18 subsistence Board person that supported this speak on
19 the teleconference. I didn't hear one Unit 23 person
20 that was supporting this speak on the teleconference.

21
22 So if you're going to stand up and say
23 something, support it when it comes to public comments.
24 The point I was trying to make here is that, jeez, if
25 you believe it, then show up for a teleconference to
26 speak up why it is that you want done, in this
27 particular case, closed to non-Federally qualified
28 hunters.

29
30 I'm not offering a lot of information
31 here. I'm just pointing out some discrepancies that
32 really bother me.

33
34 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
35 Roy. Summary of written public comments.

36
37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
38 This is Karen Deatherage. There were no written
39 comments on Proposal 18-46 or 18-47.

40
41 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
42 Public testimony. Yes.

43
44 MR. ADKISSON: Good afternoon, Mr.
45 Chairman and Council Members. My name is Ken Adkisson
46 and I've lived in Nome since 1985. While I work for
47 the Park Service what I'm going to say now represents
48 my own personal opinion and not that of my agency.

49
50

1 I have however been involved pretty
2 heavily with this so-called user conflict issue in Unit
3 23 since probably about -- at least 2000, so quite a
4 few years now. These are just some of my own
5 observations because it's a very complicated, legally
6 entangling mess and there's not a lot of really solid
7 data to support one position or another.

8
9 Almost everyone now agrees that it's
10 not a biological problem, that it's a social issue and
11 the issue of user conflict and comes down to whether or
12 not the behavior and the level of non-local hunting
13 activities significantly affect the movement of the
14 caribou population.

15
16 Like I said, you can talk to any number
17 of people and get entirely contrasting views and they
18 can offer sometimes observational information, personal
19 observational information to support whatever position
20 they want. So it's not a very easy thing to come to
21 grips with.

22
23 There's a couple things about this
24 whole issue I think I should probably point out though
25 at this point in time. First of all this so-called
26 agreement between the State and Federal managers, my
27 understanding of that was it was reached at an April
28 meeting as a compromise to address the full closure.

29
30 What actually happened though was a
31 very targeted closure that was not the one that came
32 out of the April meeting. What finally was enacted for
33 2017 as a result of Wildlife Special Action 17-03 was a
34 somewhat reduced closure area from what was presented
35 that includes a large section of the Noatak National
36 Preserve.

37
38 So what wound up being closed for this
39 year was basically a long corridor along the Noatak
40 River, the BLM lands and the Squirrel and some area in
41 the southwestern portion of Noatak Preserve. So that's
42 what we went into currently in 2017. So I think what
43 you're being presented now is kind of a choice between
44 the full closure or this other targeted closure, which
45 includes a significant hunk of the Noatak National
46 Preserve north of the Noatak River, roughly almost half
47 of the Noatak National Preserve north of the Noatak
48 River.

1 From all indications and reports I've
2 heard -- and I can't say that this is actually proof
3 that anything works or there's a causal effect, but
4 everything I've heard to date suggests that Wildlife
5 Special Action 17-03 has produced or appears to be
6 correlated with positive results in hunting in Unit 23.

7
8 So what I would suggest is that there's
9 a third alternative that folks could consider and that
10 is not go with the full closure, not go with the OSM
11 Staff recommendation, but simply stick with Wildlife
12 Special Action 17-03 and extend that for one more
13 regulatory cycle and give it a chance to see if it
14 really produces a positive effect.

15
16 There's some things that I worry about
17 personally from involvement with the issue about taking
18 up too much Federal public lands. I don't worry about
19 them so much down here in 22 for the most part, but
20 that's a good question that Mr. Ahmasuk had. At least
21 from Bering Land Bridge National Preserve we don't have
22 a lot of the good landing spots and things that they
23 have up in 23, so it would be pretty hard to pack
24 people in. But we could see some increase.

25
26 One of the things that protects us at
27 least within the Park Service lands is that to operate
28 commercial services -- and this is not private citizens
29 with their own private aircraft, which are a component
30 of that non-local hunting pressure, but for people like
31 the guides and transporters those have to be basically
32 licensed or permitted by the Park Service to operate
33 within those lands. Right now we have very few of
34 those like in Bering Land Bridge National Preserve.

35
36 So I'm not terribly worried about the
37 impacts spilling over, but I have heard from some of
38 our staff, our patrol rangers, that
39 they at least saw or what they thought reported was a
40 lot more significant activity north of Unit 23 over in
41 the Howard Pass area in the north side of Delong
42 Mountains. Whether continued practices of that, if
43 that's the case, would have an effect on altering the
44 caribou movements through those northern passes, I
45 don't know.

46
47 I've also heard this summer and through
48 a couple of our Subsistence Resource Commissions up
49 there, because it could have been simply a matter of
50

1 weather, habitat and timing, but the migration was very
2 late overall again this year and the collaring effort
3 by the State and Federal agencies at Onion Portage
4 wasn't super successful this year and I think they only
5 collared roughly some four animals or something like
6 that because the animals just didn't show up at Onion
7 Portage, which historically and for thousands of years
8 has been a pretty important hunting place up in Unit
9 23.

10

11 Whether any of this activity had any
12 effect on that, who knows, but the animals didn't come
13 and I have heard some upriver, Kobuk River, folks
14 expressing concerns about displacing the stuff in the
15 western Noatak over into the upriver eastern Noatak and
16 concerns with possibly then causing a failure down
17 through that eastern area and that bothers me a lot.

18

19 I couldn't say that that would happen,
20 but I can't say it wouldn't either. Personally, I'd
21 rather be conservative and cautious than just, you
22 know, do it. It's kind of like the old joke about
23 flying airplanes. Small, steady inputs into the
24 controls are a whole lot better than big, rapid, jerky
25 ones.

26

27 Mr. Ashenfelter spoke about trying to
28 give things a chance and slow it down. If it was me,
29 personally, I would support continuing the existing 17-
30 03 closure and look for a reasonable compromise between
31 the two ends of it because what's happening now is the
32 whole process is becoming increasingly polarized and
33 it's being driven by the two ends of the extremes of
34 the group. Basically close it down or keep it wide
35 open, neither of which I think are very satisfactory
36 answers.

37

38 So from my point of view the argument
39 or discussion is between, okay, if you're going to
40 close some of it, how much do you need to close. I
41 would rather start and work my way up the chain of that
42 than start high and have to back it back down because
43 you're always going to be having the question of did
44 our action produce a desired effect.

45

46 I would also point out that one of the
47 things that wasn't said is that the Park Service does
48 have control over a lot of its transporter activity and
49 we do in the western portion of the Noatak National
50

1 Preserve have what we call a special management area
2 where we have a delayed entry of commercial transporter
3 activity in that western part of the Noatak which was
4 designed to basically protect those communities in that
5 area, especially Noatak. It's debatable how well that
6 management action worked, but I know at least
7 internally the Park Service has been having discussions
8 about extending that period in which they can operate a
9 little further.

10

11 I just offer those extra observations
12 and the fact that we had an agreement with Federal and
13 State managers in April, which was before we saw what
14 would happen with 17-03, doesn't count much for me.
15 I'd much rather know what happened this year and
16 whether that appears to be helping the situation or
17 not. The more we stay on the two ends of the spectrum,
18 I think the more likely we're going to wind up in court
19 at some point over this too.

20

21 Again, these are my personal views and
22 they're not the views necessarily of my agency. That's
23 my views.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 I guess if anybody has any questions
28 for me, I'll take them.

29

30 MR. GRAY: Mr. Chair.

31

32 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

33

34 MR. GRAY: So 17-03 you're talking
35 about is this 229, that section of river that's been
36 blocked out? No?

37

38 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. Mr.
39 Gray. No, the map on Page 229 I believe just
40 illustrates the Noatak Controlled Use Area.

41

42 MR. GRAY: Okay. 17-03, is there a map
43 on that somewhere? Is it comparable to your other map
44 that you're proposing? You know, let me go somewhere
45 with this. I think back a couple years ago, and it
46 seems to me this board opposed the Federally --
47 whatever. We opposed this action some years ago.
48 Maybe there was a time that the Board took action and
49 supported it later, but I want to say we opposed

50

1 closing this area in the past.

2

3 Part of what I'm struggling with is the
4 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group is very
5 aggressive in trying to have regulations in place to
6 manage the caribou herd. To me, it's got a little bit
7 out of hand. I mean I feel the Feds jumped the gun
8 when they closed everything down because the Western
9 Arctic Caribou Working Group had a guideline. When
10 there's 250,000 animals, X goes on. When there's
11 200,000, X goes on. When it gets down to 180,000, no
12 more guiding, no more non-residents.

13

14 I mean there was a game plan laid out.
15 The Native communities jumped the gun and had the
16 following, everybody was sympathetic, and all of a
17 sudden they closed the areas prematurely than what the
18 guideline laid out. It just shows how powerful some
19 people can be, some agencies can be. I just shook my
20 head. I mean we're looking at 500 animals non-
21 residents are taking. They got shot down or shoved in
22 a corner somewhere, yet there's 15,000 animals being
23 killed by us. You know, it didn't make sense.

24

25 Thinking back, I thought we voted on
26 this issue at one time and voted against it. I really
27 think the management plan that the working group has
28 needs to work itself out. Being the working group
29 proposed this proposal it shows you how influential
30 they are. They're a smart group of people and they're
31 going to use whatever they have to get what they want.

32

33 Anyway, I'd sure like to know what he's
34 talking about 17-03, what area and size or whatever
35 we're talking about here.

36

37 MR. ADKISSON: Through the Chair.
38 Councilman Gray. I think I can roughly give you a good
39 explanation. If you go to Page 263 in your booklet and
40 look at the proposed closure.

41

42 What happened was the Noatak Controlled
43 Use Area used to run from roughly I think the mouth of
44 the Noatak River up to the Sapun Creek, which is about
45 halfway or so, give or take, on this current map
46 upriver. It was like five miles either side. Recently
47 the Board of Game cut off the lower end of that and
48 extended the controlled use area much further eastward
49 and I think it either went up to the Nimiuktuk or to

50

1 the Cutler and Nikki Braem could maybe answer the
2 question how far upriver that was because I can't
3 remember.

4

5 Did it go all the way to the Cutler?

6

7 MS. BRAEM: The State CUA.

8

9 MR. ADKISSON: Yeah. So that's the
10 controlled use area under the State, so it goes from
11 roughly the Aggie/Eli area and the Noatak now or
12 something or a little further north up to the Cutler.
13 That's going to stay in place unless the State Board of
14 Game changes that.

15

16 At the same time the Park Service had a
17 special management area that basically covered about
18 the western third or fourth of the Noatak National
19 Preserve that went from the western boundary to about
20 one river drainage over from the Kelly River up to the
21 next one that we prevented commercial operators from
22 flying into and dropping clients off to hunt caribou
23 until a certain date.

24

25 So what 17-03 did was basically create
26 an area that encompassed the State's controlled use
27 area plus added in the area in the far southwest around
28 the Squirrel River, which has been a longstanding area
29 for source of user conflict locally up there. So it
30 built in that lower part of your map over there. Then
31 also it took in some areas within the National Park
32 just a little further north of that. So sort of the
33 far western, southwestern part of the Noatak National
34 Preserve.

35

36 If you basically just look at that and
37 you'd extend that five mile wide line back all the way
38 through it and just envision the same thing that you
39 see up in the little arm sticking out, figure that all
40 the way back to the boundary of the park on the western
41 end and then add in the Squirrel River area in the
42 southern part of it and then that area in the far
43 southwestern part of the preserve, basically south of
44 the Noatak River, would be basically what 17-03 is.

45

46 I don't know if that helps.

47

48 MR. GRAY: So your five-mile area goes
49 from just below Noatak, actually further than that, all

50

1 the way up the river basically? Is that what I'm
2 hearing. I'm trying to vision this. I'm looking at a
3 map on 229 and I'm flipping back and forth between 263,
4 229. Evidently 229 that's in place and it sounds like
5 you have more five-mile area along that river somewhere
6 that's in place for certain things.

7
8 MR. ADKISSON: I think 17-03 basically
9 goes from the western boundary of the Noatak National
10 Preserve all the way up to the Cutler, right?

11
12 MS. WORKER: I think I might be able to
13 describe the difference. So the first thing is the
14 Noatak Controlled Use Area overlaps the proposed
15 closures and the current closures, but they're not the
16 same thing. If you look at the map on Page 263 and you
17 draw a line five miles north of the Noatak River, so
18 you just extended that five-mile corridor all the way
19 to the west. Everything south of that line is the
20 current closure. Everything north of that line is open
21 for this regulatory year.

22
23 So the area in the drainages between
24 the Kelly River and the Nimiuktuk River, that area is
25 the area that is proposed for closure under OSM's
26 modification that is not currently closed. Everything
27 south of that is the same.

28
29 MR. GRAY: So from the Nimiuktuk to the
30 Kelly River -- I see, okay. So you've just added this
31 area and this other area.

32
33 MS. WORKER: The difference between 17-
34 03, which is the current closure, and the OSM
35 modification is that the area between.....

36
37 MR. GRAY: Right.

38
39 MS. WORKER:the northern boundary
40 of the unit and then five miles north of the Noatak
41 River. We just added that in our modification. So if
42 you'd like to entertain a different solution and
43 perhaps just maintaining the current closure, then
44 that's the area that would be excluded.

45
46 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

47
48 MR. GRAY: I keep hearing a year. This
49 closure that we have now has been in place for a year,
50

Page 100

1 is that correct? I'm assuming that's the 229 page or
2 am I still lost?

3

4 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Gray.
5 Through the Chair. So the map on Page 229 is the
6 Noatak Controlled Use Area and that area limits
7 aircraft access during the fall.

8

9 MR. GRAY: Okay. I understand that.

10

11 MS. WORKER: The current closure is for
12 regulatory year 2017-2018, so that's this regulatory
13 year, July 1st to June 31st. It will expire on June
14 30th of 2018.

15

16 MR. GRAY: I'm trying to get a grasp on
17 is it all Federal lands or just.....

18

19 MS. WORKER: It is all Federal lands
20 south of the line that I just described, yes. Sorry.
21 I want to clarify that. It's not all Federal lands.
22 It's all Federal lands that are hatched in the map on
23 Page 263 south of the line that I described. I have a
24 map of it, but I only have one. Would you like to see
25 it?

26

27 MR. GRAY: If nobody else understands
28 it, I'd like to understand it.

29

30 MS. WORKER: So this is that map. This
31 is the current closure.

32

33 MR. GRAY: Okay.

34

35 MS. WORKER: They're not the same
36 scale, which is a little confusing, but this is the
37 part that's excluded.

38

39 MR. GRAY: Okay. And you want to add
40 this.

41

42 (Council looking at maps)

43

44 DR. HARDIN: Mr. Chair.

45

46 (No response)

47

48 MR. GREEN: This is Louis online. Did
49 we lose something? I'm not hearing anybody answer.

50

1 MS. WORKER: For those folks on the
2 phone there's nothing happening right now other than
3 looking at a map.

4
5 MR. GREEN: Okay. Mr. Chair. I just
6 wanted to ask a question of Staff.

7
8 (No response)

9
10 DR. HARDIN: Mr. Chair. This is Staff.
11 I'd like to provide a clarification if I might.

12
13 (No response)

14
15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jennifer Hardin is on
16 the line from OSM who would like to speak.

17
18 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes. Do we
19 have Jennifer Hardin on the phone with OSM who can
20 explain this proposal?

21
22 DR. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 This is Jennifer Hardin. I'm the subsistence policy
24 coordinator for Office of Subsistence Management. I
25 was also part of that interagency group that got
26 together to discuss this issue. Mr. Adkisson is
27 correct. As you can see from the map I believe you're
28 looking at the targeted closure that was presented and
29 the Special Action 17-03 was different than what is in
30 front of you today and WP18-46/47.

31
32 The reason for that the State and
33 Federal representatives that met in April all agreed
34 with the targeted closure that is in front of you as an
35 OSM modification and 18-46/47. We did not put that
36 forward in the special action because the additional
37 area that you see in the proposal in front of you today
38 was based on local knowledge that was presented to the
39 group from the Federal representative.

40
41 The group felt that it would be most
42 appropriate to present this targeted closure to you
43 through the RAC process so that the Councils would have
44 an opportunity to comment on this particular targeted
45 closure and the public would also have an opportunity.
46 There are fewer opportunities for public input in the
47 special action process because of the speed in which we
48 have to carry those out.

49
50

1 So the reason that the two targeted
2 closures were different is that we really wanted to
3 hear from you all in this public process about the more
4 expansive targeted closure area that's in front of you
5 today and WP18-46/47.

6
7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you. Do
10 we have any other public testimony.

11
12 (No comments)

13
14 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
15 Regional Council recommendation. Motion to adopt.

16
17 MR. KIRK: So move.

18
19 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by
20 Ronald.

21
22 MR. GREEN: This is Louis. I'll second
23 for discussion purpose.

24
25 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Seconded by
26 Louis. Discussion.

27
28 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. I have a
29 question of Staff. Thank you.

30
31 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

32
33 MR. GREEN: I want to say that 17-03
34 was supported by the Seward Pen the last cycle. Karen,
35 would you be able to provide that information?

36
37 MS. WORKER: Mr. Green. Through the
38 Chair. This is Suzanne Worker. WSA17-03 was a special
39 action and so it was subject to public meetings, but it
40 did not come before the Council, so this Council did
41 not weigh in on 17-03 as a group.

42
43 Thank you.

44
45 MR. GREEN: Okay. So what was it when
46 we went along with the Federal land closures up there
47 in 23? We took part in something there and I think we
48 took a vote on it. So I just wanted -- Tommy was
49 wondering what happened because at one point in time I
50

1 know he was there when we voted against it and then I
2 think we voted something for it. So I wanted some
3 clarification there for the Council's understanding.

4

5 MS. WORKER: Yes, that's correct. That
6 was WSA16-01, so that was the previous regulatory year
7 and that proposal was for closure of all Federal lands.

8

9 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thank you. I
10 couldn't recall the numbers and I appreciate your
11 clarifying that. So that was supported by Seward Pen
12 and Western Interior when Northwestern asked for it. I
13 guess what I haven't heard is I haven't heard any
14 length of time. I know there's some consistency issues
15 here somebody was mentioning earlier. It might have
16 been Roy. You need to have something set in place long
17 enough to see if it works or not.
18 Mr. Adkisson certainly spoke to that.

19

20 I was trying to bring that information
21 forward to where we stood. Tommy was there when we
22 stood against and I don't think he was at the meeting
23 when we voted with to go and support it. That's my
24 comment at this point.

25

26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Tom.

27

28 MR. GRAY: Okay. The way this proposal
29 is written I'm going to vote against it. I don't
30 believe that we should be taking a stand on something
31 that we've -- we've had things in place and we haven't
32 had them run their route and see what kind of impacts
33 those things made. The 17-03 for example, the area
34 that they're talking about, I don't think we had a long
35 enough run with that to understand the impacts that it
36 made.

37

38 The proposal that OSM is talking about,
39 adding a little bit more land, I don't know that out of
40 17-03 that we can justify adding those lands to it.
41 Again, I think we need to extend either 17-03 or OSM's
42 recommendation. My personal feeling, and believe me
43 I'm subsistence all the way, we need to walk cautiously
44 here and let things that have been implemented prove
45 themselves out.

46

47 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any other
48 discussion, justifications from Council.

49

50

1 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. This is Louis.
2 I have a question for Staff.

3
4 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

5
6 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
7 right now 16-01 is still in place until 2018 June 30th?

8
9 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Green.
10 Through the Chair. WSA16-01 expired at the end of
11 regulatory year '16-'17 and for regulatory year '17-'18
12 the Board's action on WSA17-03 stands. So that is the
13 targeted closure that we've been talking about. It's
14 not a full closure. Does that answer your question?

15
16 MR. GREEN: What was the number again
17 where we're at now?

18
19 MS. WORKER: So currently we're working
20 under the regulation that was established as a result
21 of the Board's action on WSA17-03.

22
23 MR. GREEN: Okay. So basically it's --
24 how close is it to what 16-01 was? I don't have the
25 material in front of me. I'm sorry.

26
27 MS. WORKER: Sorry, Mr. Green. Can
28 you repeat that question.

29
30 MR. GREEN: I was trying to -- you
31 know, when we found in favor of 16-01, I'm trying to
32 figure out how close that is tot he 17-03. I don't
33 have any of the paperwork in front of me. I'm out in
34 the middle of Washington here.

35
36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Green. Through
37 the Chair. If I could clarify for Suzanne. I think
38 what you're asking is what are the differences between
39 WSA16-01 and 17-03?

40
41 MR. GREEN: Yeah. I don't have
42 anything in front of me to compare the two. Sorry.
43 Thank you.

44
45 MS. WORKER: Okay. I got it. So
46 WSA16-01 was for regulatory year '16-'17 and it closed
47 all Federal public lands in Unit 23 to the harvest of
48 caribou by non-Federally qualified users.

49
50

1 In regulatory year 2017-18, that was
2 WSA17-03. It was a targeted closure, so many Federal
3 public lands remained open.

4
5 Does that help?

6
7 MR. GREEN: Yes, it does. It tells me
8 that there was a little less restricted for the
9 following year, from which we originally found in favor
10 of on 16-01. Thank you.

11
12 MS. WORKER: Yes, that's right.

13
14 DR. HARDIN: Mr. Chair.

15
16 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes.

17
18 DR. HARDIN: This is Jennifer Hardin at
19 OSM again. I just wanted to restate that the current
20 special action WSA17-03 will expire after one
21 regulatory year.

22
23 MR. GREEN: Which is 2018 June 30?

24
25 MS. WORKER: That's correct.

26
27 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, go ahead.

28
29 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 Carl Johnson, OSM. Just to kind of add the punctuation
31 on Ms. Hardin's comments just now, that means if the
32 Board were not to adopt this proposal in any form,
33 either as originally written or as modified, all of
34 Unit 23 would then be reopened to all hunters, not just
35 targeted closure or a closure to non-Federally
36 qualified. It means the entire unit would be open to
37 all hunters eligible.

38
39 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

40
41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 This is Karen Deatherage. So what we have before us as
43 the Council is possibly two options here. Either
44 oppose or take no action on this proposal, which, as
45 Mr. Johnson explained, will result in opening all the
46 Federal lands to all users after this 17-03 special
47 action expires.

48
49 The second that you have -- you have
50

1 three actually. The second option is to go ahead and
2 approve this proposal, which I remind you is a
3 permanent proposal. This is not a special action, so
4 this would go in the regulation book as a permanent
5 proposal until you change it during the next cycle.

6
7 The other option you have is to make a
8 recommendation that perhaps you want to amend this
9 proposal to be closer to 17-03 if you feel more
10 comfortable with Wildlife Special Action 17-03, you can
11 go back to those closed areas and use those and put
12 forth that as your recommendation as a Council.

13
14 So does that make any sense there?
15 Those look like the options that you have on the table
16 right now for this proposal. But I think it is
17 important for the Council to understand that taking no
18 action or opposing could result in opening all Federal
19 lands again in Unit 23 to all users.

20
21 Thank you.

22
23 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Leland.

24
25 MR. OYOUNICK: I think if they're going
26 to disrupt the migration pattern of those caribou by
27 leaving it open to non-Federally qualified people, then
28 I think they shouldn't be there because these people
29 that are trying to catch these caribou have been there
30 for how long and these non-Federally people come in
31 with their planes and do whatever in their regulation.
32 All they want is to catch their caribou the way they
33 used to. Okay, let them do that.

34
35 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: So if we
36 support this proposal, it's going to be more beneficial
37 to their wishes, right? It would still be closed to
38 non-Federal subsistence users, which just ended, right?
39 And also leaving that corridor closed also. I'm just
40 kind of mixed up or, you know. It may be in our best
41 interest if we support this proposal. I don't know.

42
43 Yes, Tom.

44
45 MR. GRAY: I guess, you know, I'm
46 sitting here thinking that we need to kind of tread
47 carefully because we've heard from the State that this
48 herd has plateaued and it could go either way. It
49 could keep going down or it could go back up. I'm

50

1 leaning towards let's extend this 17-03 and see where
2 that takes us in the next year or two years. Extend
3 it, whatever we need to do.

4
5 Unfortunately, the impacts of this
6 proposal aren't going to impact us. It's going to
7 impact people up north and we're making a decision for
8 those people up north to a point, you know. Our input
9 is going to eventually get to the big Board and they're
10 going to decide what to do.

11
12 If this was going on down here, you
13 still have to think about the resource and how that
14 resource is doing. Is it growing, is it getting
15 smaller, is it dropping like a rock. You know, the
16 impacts of that herd's movements and so on and so
17 forth, people are still getting their caribou. You
18 heard from OSM and folks that there's 12,000 animals
19 being killed. There's 15,000 animals being killed. So
20 something is working right up there.

21
22 It could backfire on these folks.
23 There's some players up in Kotzebue that's pushing this
24 thing and that's why it came through the Western Arctic
25 Caribou Herd Working Group because they have a little
26 bit of oomph and things can happen, but it can also
27 backfire on them.

28
29 Again, my feeling is let's get some
30 more information. Let's put it for another year
31 whether we include OSM's area or the 17-03. To me it
32 doesn't really matter, but I'd hate to see us close all
33 Federal lands. It's not that drastic of a situation up
34 there right now. I feel it isn't. I've been involved
35 in some of these talks and so on and so forth for the
36 last couple years.

37
38 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
39 further discussion or justification.

40
41 MR. GREEN: I guess I have the floor,
42 Mr. Chair. Thank you. It is my intent to support
43 subsistence hunts in 23. There may be a time when it's
44 in our backyard where we may be asking for support to
45 make things happen that we think we need. On the 16-01
46 Western Interior along with Seward Peninsula RAC
47 supported Northwest closure of all Federal lands.

48
49 It sounds like to me there's a
50

1 relaxation of some of that and there's a movement where
2 the concentrations are where the State and Feds decided
3 that these are probably the most important places to be
4 restrictive or not to be restrictive.

5
6 I'm sorry that I didn't have all that
7 information before. I didn't take the time. I had
8 things going on. The point is I want to be supportive
9 of their issues up there because we're working off the
10 same herd. I would expect in the future that if it was
11 necessary we could call upon our neighbors who use the
12 same resource in dealing with our issues in the future.

13
14 I'm not sure -- I mean Tommy's got the
15 idea he wants to be supportive. He doesn't know which
16 way to go. As well as I do. I'm not sure if it's 17-03
17 or if we recognize what OSM is recommending today, the
18 right route. Either way it's still supportive of our
19 neighbors that use the same resource.

20
21 You know, we're going to have some of
22 these conflicts on the Seward Peninsula soon. I hear
23 stuff on State lands where there's guiding going on and
24 residents doing without and guides and their clients
25 getting what they need. My feeling is to support.
26 Which one do we support, I haven't found a position on
27 which number to use. Karen outlined three.

28
29 With that I'll yield the floor.

30
31 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32
33 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes. Our
34 original motion is to support WP18-46/47 close caribou
35 harvest to non-Federally qualified users in Unit 23.
36 Tom.

37
38 MR. GRAY: Okay. I'm going to put my
39 hands on the table and let them get beat up. So I make
40 an amendment that would replace the language and the
41 amendment would adopt OSM's proposal for the next
42 whatever and that would replace the motions for both of
43 those proposals to just close all lands to Federally
44 qualified people. It would close the lands that's
45 proposed by OSM to -- it would close it to non-
46 Federally authorized people. So that's my motion.

47
48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Gray. Through
49 the Chair. The OSM has recommended taking no action on
50

1 Proposal 46 and then the modifications were listed in
2 Proposal 47 or reversed, the other way. So the Council
3 could take no action on Proposal No. 47 and then they
4 could take an amendment to accept the OSM modification
5 for Proposal 46 if they want to do that to the current
6 motion.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 MR. GRAY: Okay. I so move.

11

12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. We have
13 an amendment to 47. Do we have a second on the floor.

14

15 MR. GREEN: This is Louis. I'll second
16 it.

17

18 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
19 Louis. Question.

20

21 MR. GREEN: Is there any further
22 discussion, Mr. Chair? This is Louis again, Mr. Chair.
23 Could we just have the motion read with the amendment.

24

25 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Green. So
26 the motion is to support the OSM preliminary
27 conclusion, which is to take no action on WP18-47 and
28 to support Proposal WP18-46 with a modification to
29 close some but not all Federal public lands in Unit 23
30 to caribou hunting except by Federally qualified users.
31 So this is the targeted closure that we've been
32 discussing.

33

34 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thank you for
35 clarification, Staff. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: With no
40 further discussion, take a vote on the motion with the
41 amendment. All in favor of the motion with the
42 amendment signify by saying aye.

43

44 IN UNISON: Aye.

45

46 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
47 opposed.

48

49 (No opposing votes)

50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion to
2 support WP18-46/47 adopted.

3
4 MR. GRAY: Do we have to vote on the
5 original motion now or have we circumvented it, Karen?

6
7
8 MR. GREEN: We voted for the motion of
9 the amendment. Then we would vote on the original
10 motion. Sorry to cut in. The original proposal.

11
12 MR. GRAY: Would that be as amended
13 or.....

14
15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes. Right?

16
17 MR. GRAY:how do we vote on it?

18
19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, it would be as
20 amended. So go back to the original motion, motion to
21 adopt Proposal No. 46 as amended and you don't have to
22 do anything on 47 because you took no action.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Can you word
27 that through the Chair for me, please, and then we'll
28 vote on it, Karen.

29
30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. Members of
31 the Council. The original motion was to adopt Proposal
32 46 and take no action on Proposal 47. The Council has
33 a further motion, which asked to amend Proposal No. 46
34 to include the OSM language which would close some but
35 not all Federal lands by OSM. So the Council will now
36 need to go back to the original motion and approve as
37 amended. So if you get a motion on the floor to
38 approve what I just said as amended and then second it
39 and vote on it, it will be clear. Thanks.

40
41 MR. GREEN: So moved, Mr. Chair.

42
43 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
44 Louis. Do we have a second.

45
46 MR. SEETOT: Second.

47
48 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
49 Elmer. All those in favor of the motion signify by
50

1 saying aye.

2

3

IN UNISON: Aye.

4

5

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those

6

opposed same.

7

8

(No opposing votes)

9

10

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion

11

carried.

12

13

MR. GRAY: Suzanne, next time pass out

14

maps early.

15

16

MS. WORKER: Good thing I did my

17

homework before I came and I had that in my back

18

pocket, huh.

19

20

(Laughter)

21

22

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Before moving

23

forward maybe let's take a 10-minute break.

24

25

(Off record)

26

27

(On record)

28

29

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Let's try to

30

make it back to our seats and we'll continue with the

31

agenda. Okay. Next on the agenda we have Wildlife

32

Proposal 18-48/49, required registration permit for

33

caribou in Unit 22, 23 and 26A. Can I have

34

introduction and presentation of analyst.

35

36

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

37

This is Suzanne Worker again. The analysis for WP18-

38

48/49 begins on Page 277 of your meeting materials.

39

40

WP18-48 was submitted by the Western

41

Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group and WP18-49 was

42

submitted by Louis Cusack. They both request that

43

Federal reporting requirements for caribou in Units 22,

44

23, and 26A be aligned with the State's registration

45

permit requirements.

46

47

The proponents believe that the

48

registration permits are useful tools for more accurate

49

harvest reporting, which in turn informs good

50

1 management decisions. They note that this becomes
2 increasingly important as the population shrinks and
3 has hunting has a bigger and bigger impact on the
4 population. They also note that this request will
5 reduce confusion among Federally qualified subsistence
6 users given the mix of Federal and non-Federal lands in
7 these units.

8
9 Again, both herds have declined
10 significantly in recent years and the harvest is at the
11 estimated harvestable surplus in the case of the
12 Western Arctic Herd and it likely exceeds the
13 harvestable surplus in the case of the Teshekpuk
14 Caribou Herd. I can give you additional details about
15 the biology and the harvest of those herds if you'd
16 like.

17
18 If this proposal is adopted, State
19 registration permits will be required to hunt caribou
20 in Units 22, 23 and 26A in both State and Federal
21 regulation. On one hand using these permits will be
22 burdensome to some users, but on the other they're
23 already required on the State side, so this would
24 reduce regulatory complexity by aligning the State and
25 Federal reporting requirements.

26
27 These changes wouldn't have any direct
28 biological impacts, but they will provide better
29 harvest data, which is an increasingly important
30 management tool as these caribou populations become
31 smaller.

32
33 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
34 support Proposal WP18-48 and to take no action on
35 Proposal 18-49.

36
37 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38
39 I can take questions if the Council has
40 any.

41
42 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
43 questions from the Council.

44
45 MS. WORKER: Mr. Chair. I might add
46 one more thing. So just a little bit of the history
47 about how we got to this proposal. For regulatory year
48 2016 and 2017 the State began requiring registration
49 permits for Unit 22 and I believe that proposal came
50

1 out of one of the local ACs, so that was a
2 user-generated proposal.

3
4 In regulatory year 2017 and 2018, the
5 State began requiring registration permits in Units 23
6 and 26, so this proposal just brings the Federal
7 regulations into alignment with those recent changes in
8 State regulation.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: So currently
13 if I hunt under the Federal regulations and I'm in 22E,
14 I do not have to have a permit from State of Alaska to
15 hunt caribou if it's not required under the Federal
16 regulations.

17
18 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If
19 you are hunting on Federal land in Unit 22E, you
20 currently do not need to have a registration permit to
21 hunt caribou. The problem with that is that there's a
22 big push to get a better handle on what's going on with
23 harvest in this population so that it can be managed
24 hopefully better.

25
26 So we know that Federally qualified
27 subsistence users harvest the vast majority of caribou
28 from this herd. Currently a registration permit is
29 permitted under State regulation, but if Federally
30 qualified subsistence users can hunt without a
31 registration permit on Federal lands, it's basically a
32 big loophole to avoid reporting and what we really need
33 at this point is good reporting.

34
35 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
36 Currently, even though we're not required to have those
37 permits, we do get the permits for the reporting
38 requirement even though we hunt in Federal lands.
39 Currently all the caribou hunters up there do get a
40 permit. I know it does benefit the Department on how
41 much caribou is harvested and for future studies also I
42 presume.

43
44 Yes, Tom.

45
46 MR. GRAY: Okay. I jumped in on every
47 one. I might as well keep going here. Who is going to
48 manage this registration permit? Are you going to or
49 the State or what are you proposing here?

50

1 MS. WORKER: The proposal is to require
2 a State registration permit and right now I'm going to
3 look at the analysis and make sure I'm not misspeaking
4 on that. Yeah, it's to require a State registration
5 permit, so the State will manage that. It won't be a
6 separate permit. It will be the same permit that you
7 use to hunt under State regulation and it will be valid
8 on Federal land and State land.

9
10 So basically one system.

11
12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
13 questions on the proposal.

14
15 (No comments)

16
17 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Moving on.
18 Reports on Board consultation, tribes and ANCSA
19 corporations.

20
21 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
22 There were no reports on Board consultations from the
23 tribes or the ANCSA corporations on Proposal No. 18-48
24 or Proposal 18-49.

25
26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
27 Agency comments. ADF&G, Federal and tribal.

28
29 MR. DUNKER: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.
30 Bill Dunker with ADF&G again. I'll just provide our
31 recommendation for this proposal. The Department
32 supports this proposal although we recognize that a
33 registration permit is a significant change to
34 historical hunt administration. The recent actions by
35 the Board of Game to require caribou registration
36 permits for all resident hunters in Unit 22, 23 and 26A
37 has been through an extensive public process with the
38 advisory committees, the Western Arctic Herd Working
39 Group, Council and the Board of Game.

40
41 Adopting this proposal will align
42 hunting seasons and bag limits on Federal and State
43 managed lands and should be a useful tool to monitor
44 harvest and provide data for herd management. Broad
45 public support is needed for a registration permit hunt
46 type to be effective for management. The Department
47 will need to engage in education and outreach to
48 implement the registration permit hunt structure by
49 building awareness and support.

50

1 Just as a side note, obviously that
2 education and outreach component that I mentioned there
3 is more or less underway both in Unit 22, 23 and 26A.
4 We've had staff visiting communities in the Kotzebue
5 Sound area and on the North Slope throughout the course
6 of this year since that regulation went into place and
7 I would anticipate that to continue into the future as
8 we encourage public participation in the process.

9

10 Thanks.

11

12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
13 Advisory group comments, other Regional Councils. Fish
14 and Game Advisory Committees. Subsistence Resource
15 Commissions.

16

17 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 This is Suzanne Worker. The Western Interior Regional
19 Advisory Council supported the OSM conclusion on WP18-
20 48 and 49. They agree that the harvest data is an
21 important tool for management and that registration
22 permits improve harvest reporting.

23

24 Thank you.

25

26 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
27 Summary of written public comments.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 This is Karen Deatherage. OSM received no public
31 comments on WP18-48 or 18-49.

32

33 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
34 Public testimony. Anybody on the phone.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
39 Regional Council recommendations. Motion to adopt.

40

41 MR. GRAY: I move to adopt.

42

43 MR. GREEN: So moved, Mr. Chair.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. This is Louis.

48

49 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

50

1 MR. GREEN: I'm just trying to make
2 sure I got still hooked up there because there was a
3 lot of hissing going on there. I did make a motion.
4

5 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Okay. The
6 motion would read support 48 and no action on 49.
7

8 MR. GREEN: The OSM, yes.
9

10 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: I believe
11 that's the OSM recommendation.
12

13 MR. GREEN: Yes, I made that motion.
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Discussion.
15

16 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have a
17 second.
18

19 MR. KIRK: Second.
20

21 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
22 Ronald. Discussion. Yes, Elmer.
23

24 MR. SEETOT: WP48 and 49 are pretty
25 much the same in language if that's what I understand.
26

27 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
28 other discussion.
29

30 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. This is Louis.
31

32 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.
33

34 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. So there was
35 support from Western Interior I think I heard and then
36 what about Northwest?
37

38 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Green.
39 Through the Chair. The Northwest Arctic Regional
40 Advisory Council meets tomorrow and the next day, so
41 they have not weighed in on this proposal yet.
42

43 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thank you for that.
44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45

46 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
47 Any further discussion.
48

49 (No comments)
50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none,
2 we'll proceed to take a vote. All in favor of the
3 motion signify by saying aye.

4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6
7 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
8 opposed same.

9
10 (No opposing votes)

11
12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion carried
13 to adopt WP18-48 and take no action on 49. Support 48.

14
15 Okay. Let's go down to our last
16 proposal. It statewide proposal WP18-51, modify
17 definition of bait. Introduction and presentation of
18 analyst.

19
20 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21 This is Suzanne Worker one last time hopefully. WP18-
22 51 begins on Page 321 of your meeting book. This
23 proposal was submitted by the Eastern Interior Regional
24 Advisory Council and they request that bear baiting
25 restrictions be aligned with State regulations,
26 specifically those related to the use of biodegradable
27 materials.

28
29 State regulations allow the use of any
30 biodegradable material as bait, so this includes things
31 like dog food, popcorn, grease, day-old pastries, but
32 the Federal regulations currently only allow the use of
33 the head, bones, viscera, or skin
34 of legally harvested fish and wildlife as bait.

35
36 The Western Interior Council argues
37 that because Federal regulations are more restrictive
38 than State regulations they do not provide a
39 subsistence priority. They also note that many of the
40 items excluded under Federal regulation have
41 traditionally been used as bear bait.

42
43 There are a couple of recent regulatory
44 changes that are important to this issue. The first is
45 that in 2015 the National Park Service published a rule
46 prohibiting the take of black and brown bears over bait
47 on National Preserves under State regulation.

48
49 In 2017, the Park Service published a
50

1 rule limiting types of bait that may be used for taking
2 bears under Federal Subsistence Regulations to native
3 fish or wildlife remains with some exceptions for the
4 Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.
5 So what this means is that for the most part any
6 changes that are made as a result of this proposal
7 wouldn't apply to Park Service lands.

8
9 I also want to note that scent lure is
10 not defined in either State or Federal regulation and
11 the consequences of that were considered in this
12 analysis.

13
14 If this proposal is adopted, Federally
15 qualified subsistence users could use any biodegradable
16 material including scent lures at registered bear
17 baiting stations on lands administered by the Fish and
18 Wildlife Service, by the Forest Service or by BLM. On
19 National Park Service lands, bait would continue to be
20 limited to native fish and wildlife remains. Again,
21 there are some exceptions for the Wrangell-St. Elias
22 National Park and Preserve.

23
24 Adoption of this proposal will reduce
25 regulatory complexity and user confusion by aligning
26 the State and Federal regulations on most Federal land.
27 Because the requested changes are already permitted
28 under State regulation, there isn't expected to be an
29 effect on the bear population on harvest, on
30 subsistence uses or on habituation of bears to human
31 foods.

32
33 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
34 support WP18-51 with modification to, first, establish
35 a definition for scent lure and, second, to clarify the
36 regulatory language substituting the word wildlife for
37 the terms game, fur animals, and small game because
38 these terms were not defined under Federal regulations,
39 but are included in the Federal definition of wildlife.

40
41 So those are just a few really
42 bureaucratic changes to make sure that the regulations
43 work okay, but the OSM preliminary conclusion is to
44 support with modification.

45
46 That's all I have, but I will be happy
47 to take questions.

48
49 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any questions
50

1 from the Council.

2

3 Yes, Tom.

4

5 MR. GRAY: All this controversial
6 stuff, huh. I question in Unit 22 it seems to be bear
7 baiting is not something that's permitted, is that
8 right?

9

10 MS. HUGHES: This is Letty with Alaska
11 Department of Fish and Game. Through the Chair to
12 Member Tom Gray. You are correct. There is no bear
13 baiting for brown bear or black bear in Unit 22.

14

15 MR. GRAY: So I guess my question is
16 how does that affect this proposal?

17

18 MS. WORKER: Through the Chair. So the
19 definitions and the regulatory language associated with
20 bear baiting much of that is not in the unit-specific
21 regulations. It's in the general provisions and so it
22 affects the regulations. If the Council prefers not to
23 weigh in on this, that's certainly their prerogative.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. Member
26 Gray. The Kodiak/Aleutians Council did in fact vote to
27 take no action on this proposal because bear baiting is
28 also not permitted in their region or not conducted in
29 their region. So that is an option for the Council if
30 they choose later when the Council deliberates.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Do we have any
35 further questions. Yes, Brandon.

36

37 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
38 want to get out of here just like you do, but I've got
39 a question. I don't know how you say it, if I'm
40 playing devil's advocate. Currently the no bear
41 baiting within 22 is all of 22 or just on State-
42 selected lands within 22?

43

44 MS. HUGHES: Through the Chair to
45 Member Ahmasuk. This actually would be for all. For
46 State land we do not have a season for permitting brown
47 or black bear baiting.

48

49 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair.

50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes.

2

3 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
4 is Louis. So, in other words, if we voted for it, then
5 it would be consistent with all Federal lands, which
6 includes 22, Bering Land Bridge, under general?

7

8 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Green.
9 Through the Chair. I'm going to try to answer that
10 question. In general, any changes to these regulations
11 would not affect Park Service lands because of the
12 agency rules that Park Service has recently made. So
13 Bering Land Bridge would be excluded even if bear
14 baiting was allowed in Unit 22, but it's not.

15

16 MR. GREEN: Thank you for that answer.
17 I just wanted to make sure I was on the right train.

18

19 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Leland.

20

21 MR. OYOUMICK: Does baiting include
22 like dead carcasses on the beach and like a dead whale
23 or dead walrus or a dead seal? Is that classified as
24 baiting?

25

26 MS. HUGHES: Through the Chair to
27 Member Leland. Yes, it would be classified as baiting.
28 However there are permits on the State land that
29 someone could salvage, you know, like an animal that
30 had naturally died, you know. So then we would provide
31 a permit so you could use that for trapping or whatnot,
32 but for bears it would be considered bear baiting.

33

34 MR. OYOUMICK: You know, like walruses
35 and big whales, that's what I'm referring to. I mean
36 they wash up on the beach here and there every now and
37 then. Every time there's giant bears there.

38

39 MS. HUGHES: You are correct. So
40 that's not intentionally, so you didn't physically put
41 out that carcass. If carcasses wash up on shore, bears
42 are going to come along and if there's a bear there
43 during open bear season in Unit 22, then you can have
44 that bear.

45

46 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any further
47 questions.

48

49 (No comments)

50

1 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: No further
2 questions. Report on Board consultation, tribes and
3 ANCSA corporations.

4
5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
6 This is Karen Deatherage and there was no consultation
7 received from tribes or ANCSA corporations on WP18-51.
8 Thank you.

9
10 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
11 Karen. Agency comments. ADF&G, Federal and tribal.

12
13 MS. HUGHES: This is Letty from Fish
14 and Game. The Department supports the statewide
15 proposal because it would reduce regulatory complexity
16 and user confusion by allowing Federally qualified
17 users to bait bears with additional attraction such as
18 dog food or baked goods that are currently allowed
19 under State regulations.

20
21 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
22 Letty. Advisory group comments, other Regional
23 Councils. Fish and Game Advisory Committees.
24 Subsistence Resource Commissions.

25
26 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 This is Suzanne Worker again. The Western Interior
28 Regional Advisory Council supported the OSM conclusion
29 for WP18-51. They believe that this change will
30 provide clarity about what is allowed and that it will
31 reduce regulatory complexity. The Yukon-Kuskokwim
32 Regional Advisory Council supported WP18-51.

33
34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35
36 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you.
37 Summary of written public comments.

38
39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 This is Karen Deatherage. OSM received three written
41 comments opposing WP18-51 and collectively the reason
42 for the opposition was that it would food condition
43 bears to human food therefore resulting in safety
44 concerns. The writers also believed that this
45 regulation would conflict with other ADF&G regulations
46 that prohibit intentionally feeding bears. So there's
47 concern from three individuals on that 18-51.

48
49 Thank you.

50

1
2 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Thank you,
3 Karen. Public testimony. Any public testimony on the
4 phone.

5
6 (No comments)

7
8 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Hearing none.
9 Regional Council recommendations. Motion to adopt.

10
11 MR. GREEN: This is Louis. I'll move.

12
13 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion by
14 Louis.

15
16 MR. KIRK: Second.

17
18 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Second by
19 Ronald. Discussion. Yes, Tom.

20
21 MR. GRAY: You know, I don't have any
22 problem baiting wolves and other smaller game animals,
23 but if we have regulations stating that you can't, for
24 example, bait bears and we adopt a regulation or
25 support a regulation that opposes regulations in our
26 area, to me it doesn't make sense.

27
28 MS. WORKER: I think I can clarify
29 that, Mr. Gray. Through the Chair. So you can think
30 about the regulations being broken down into two parts.
31 There's the general provisions which apply to all units
32 and then there's the unit specific regulations which
33 apply only to the unit.

34
35 So the proposed changes for bear
36 baiting are in the general provisions. So it doesn't
37 -- it won't affect the bear baiting situation in Unit
38 22. It's just changing the definitions basically in
39 the subsistence regulations, in the general
40 regulations. Does that help?

41
42 MR. GREEN: Housekeeping.

43
44 MR. GRAY: And this is only for
45 subsistence take of bears or is it also for bears that
46 Tom Gray has guided on and taken? You know, I guess
47 what I'm worried about is setting precedence.

48
49 MS. WORKER: So the proposal is aiming
50

1 to bring the Federal regulations closer into alignment
2 with State regulations, but for the purposes of Federal
3 regulation it applies only to subsistence.

4
5 So any bears harvested at a bait
6 station if it were allowed would require salvage of the
7 meat just like the subsistence regulations say. So for
8 the purposes of this regulation it does not apply to
9 you and your clients. It applies only to subsistence
10 harvest.

11
12 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Gray. Through
13 the Chair. Also ADF&G when they do issue bear baiting
14 permits, this is a formal permit for having a bear
15 baiting station, so it's not like you could just go out
16 and throw something down on the ground and wait for a
17 bear to show up. You have to go through training and
18 you have to receive a permit for a bear baiting
19 station. So it wouldn't apply as a guide if you were
20 out there to just set up bait without having to go
21 through the process.

22
23 Is that helpful?

24
25 MR. GRAY: Yeah, it's a little bit
26 helpful. Again, I question -- I don't understand
27 regulations and all that stuff and why are we adopting
28 measures that don't apply to my area? Whenever I
29 discuss issues I always worry about precedence, about
30 adopting something and it coming back and hammering us
31 in the face later on. I'm sorry I'm being so ignorant
32 about this.

33
34 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair.

35
36 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Louis.

37
38 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
39 is a housekeeping thing for the Office of Subsistence
40 Management. Me, as far as bears are concerned, we have
41 way too many and bear baiting wouldn't bother me, but
42 since it isn't in the State we don't deal with that
43 anyway.

44
45 I still think that this is a
46 housekeeping measure and I'd feel comfortable
47 supporting it. It doesn't really apply to any guiding.
48 It doesn't apply to subsistence take. Am I clear on
49 that, through the State?

50

1 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Green. Are
2 you asking if it applies to subsistence take? Was that
3 your question?
4

5 MR. GREEN: Yeah. Mr. Gray was asking
6 about commercial guiding, whether you could or could
7 not. I'm not hearing that as subsistence use in Unit
8 22 under State regs, am I correct?
9

10 MS. WORKER: So this relates to the
11 general provisions which apply to all units, so it's
12 specifically related to subsistence take. Now because
13 the take of bears over bait is not allowed in 22, that
14 gets a little bit philosophical, but, yes, it applies
15 to subsistence take statewide.
16

17 MR. GREEN: Thank you for that answer.
18 I would just think if it would ever come to that point
19 we would already have dealt with it in housekeeping on
20 the Federal side if the State decided to undertake
21 something like that in the future. I don't have a
22 problem supporting statewide.
23

24 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, go ahead.
25 I apologize. Why am I not remembering everybody's name
26 today. Carl.
27

28 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A
29 couple points. First of all, through the Chair, Tom,
30 you're concerned about setting precedent. To kind of
31 help and provide a comparison for you a couple years
32 ago in the fisheries cycle there was a proposal
33 regarding providing a definition of hook in Federal
34 regulations.
35

36 The point was because there wasn't a
37 definition in Federal regulations, the State regulation
38 would apply if there weren't a Federal definition and
39 that created problems for some subsistence users. That
40 only applies if hook is a legal gear type for
41 subsistence fishing in your area. So just because
42 there was a definition it didn't benefit you, but it
43 benefitted other subsistence users who were currently
44 under that regulation.
45

46 So the question here is not whether or
47 not you want to have or there should be bear baiting at
48 all in Unit 22. The question is some day if there is
49 bear baiting in Unit 22, maybe on BLM lands, what do
50

1 you want to be as an allowable bait for bear baiting if
2 that happens. That's how it will affect you.

3
4 But currently in other regions where
5 bear baiting is allowed under Federal subsistence
6 regulations to have this conflicting situation where
7 they have a State regulation where if they wanted to
8 hunt under State regs, they could use these types of
9 baits currently under State regulations, but they're
10 not provided under Federal, so there's some confusion.

11
12 So your action benefits them now, but
13 also your region in the future if bear baiting were
14 allowed and then at least you would have a clarity
15 between the State and the Federal definition of bait.

16
17 I hope that helped.

18
19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20
21 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Yes, Brandon.

22
23 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
24 understand it's basically a housekeeping issue, but
25 I've heard basically two or three different things
26 going on here. Ms. Hughes, if we could get you back up
27 to the table, I'd really appreciate it.

28
29 Correct me if I'm wrong, I'm getting
30 tired probably, but what I heard was so if there's a
31 washed-up seal on the beach and I take the bear right
32 there, he's eating on it, technically, even though I
33 have not put that there, I've taken it under bear
34 baiting, correct?

35
36 MS. HUGHES: Through the Chair to
37 Member Brandon Ahmasuk. No. Bear baiting is a
38 specific season, so that would be something that on the
39 State side would have to -- a proposal would need to be
40 submitted and then adopted by the Board. Then it would
41 be very specific. You know, this is a permit, you've
42 had bear baiting clinic, you'd have to register your
43 bait station.

44
45 What you're asking is a carcass washes
46 up on shore. The definition of bait here is any
47 material excluding scent lures placed to attract an
48 animal by sense of smell or taste. Bait does not
49 include those parts of legally taken animals that are
50

1 not required to be salvaged as edible meat. The parts
2 are not moved from the kill site.

3
4 So that would include having animals
5 that died of natural causes, you know, the game was not
6 moved. So in the sense of a seal washing up on shore.
7 It's normal general harvest bear season with a firearm
8 or bow, you could take that animal.

9
10 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you.

11
12 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Any other
13 discussion, justification.

14
15 MR. GRAY: Was there a motion or do I
16 need to make a motion?

17
18 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: We did the
19 motion.

20
21 MR. GRAY: Question.

22
23 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: We're on
24 discussion.

25
26 (No comments)

27
28 MR. GRAY: Okay. Question.

29
30 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: If there is no
31 other discussions, I will proceed to take a vote on the
32 motion. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

33
34 IN UNISON: Aye.

35
36 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: All those
37 opposed same.

38
39 (No opposing votes)

40
41 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Motion carried
42 to approve WP18-51, modify definition of bait.

43
44 Okay. We'll call it a day and proceed
45 again tomorrow.

46
47 MS. DEATHERAGE: 9:00 o'clock.

48
49 ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: At 9:00

50

1 o'clock a.m.

2

3

MR. GREEN: Recess.

4

5

ACTING CHAIR ENINGOWUK: Recess. Thank

6

you.

7

8

(Off record)

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10

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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